

## Once Remembered

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# Once Remembered

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## Summary

Slight Kill la Kill AU in which most of the things are the same except Ryuko and Uzu were actually childhood friends and bonded through delinquency and such, but after Isshin Matoi died, Ryuko became so focused on finding out who killed her father and her memory clouded over, making her believe that she didn't have any friends growing up and that she was alone most of her life. Fast forward to where she appears at Honnouji academy for the first time, Uzu recognizes her but she doesn't recognize him and Uzu has to pretend that he has never seen her before in his life because she is now the enemy of Satsuki.

# Chapter 1

Chapter 1:

"Teacher! Teacher, they're fighting again!" One of the kids yelled, pointing over to the young boy and girl fighting on the ground. The boy had been pushed to the ground, with the little girl sitting on him while she smacked his face, the little boy using his arm to block the girl's hits.

The teacher quickly ran over to the two, gently moving the other students out of the way. "Hey, hey! Stop it you two!" The teacher yelled, pulling the two of them to their feet and standing them *away* from each other. "This is the third fight this week, principal's office, now." She scolded the two, the little girl with the dark hair and red streak in her hair and the boy with the wild green hair.

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"Matoi Ryuko..."

The little girl with the red streak in her hair huffed heavily as she cradled her sore cheek. That green headed brat had managed to slug her cheek once before she threw him on the ground.

"This is the third time I've seen you this week. And all because you keep fighting with the boy a year ahead of you..." The principal said, peering down at Ryuko from over the rim of his glasses. "Is there any reason you keep fighting with him?"

Ryuko huffed, kicking her legs that dangled over the edge of the chair. "He's stupid..." She answered.

"That's not a valid reason to hit another student, Matoi Ryuko. Your father is on his way to get you," Ryuko looked up at her principal in surprise. "Why don't you sit in the waiting room until your father gets here." The principal advised, turning to the papers on his desk.

Ryuko nodded slowly, rising to her feet as she made for the door. The door opened, revealing the principal's next appointment. Ryuko almost bumped into the boy, almost apologizing until she saw his face and stupid green hair. Ryuko glared at him. "You-!" Ryuko frowned at him.

The boy glared right back, his one of his cheeks covered in scratch marks while the other was swollen like her cheek. "It's you-!"

"Matoi Ryuko, sit in the waiting room." The principal said warningly. Ryuko spared a glance back at the principal before she glared back at the boy with the stupid green hair. She stuck her tongue out at him before she ran out of the room.

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"Heard you got into a fight with an older boy, Ryuko..." Isshin said as he kneeled before his daughter. Ryuko frowned, but nodded anyway. Though his beard blocked the view of his mouth, Ryuko could faintly register that her father had smiled. "Did you win?" Her father chuckled.

Ryuko smiled, probably for the first time that day and nodded enthusiastically. "Good girl," he said and patted her head before he's stood to his feet. "Come on, let's head home." He said, grabbing Ryuko's hand and helping her from the chair. They exited the office but before they could make that far from the building, a little boy stood before them. He was maybe a year older than Ryuko and he had stupid green hair.

A frown appeared on Ryuko's lips. "What do you want?" She grumbled.

The green haired boy bit his lip before he walked forward in front of Ryuko, his hands shoved into his pockets. He took a breath as he frowned before finally decided to speak up. "You fight well, Ryuko Matoi..." He grumbled and stuck his hand out toward Ryuko, his cheeks red.

Ryuko blinked in surprise. "Y-You too..." Ryuko looked him up and down. "Uzu Sanageyama..." She said and grinned, taking the boy's hand in her own. Uzu grinned as well, vigorously shaking his new friend's hand.

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Uzu breathed heavily, his bamboo sword slung over his shoulder. "You okay... Matoi?" Uzu heaved as he turned to Ryuko who slumped beside him.

Ryuko nodded, leaning against Uzu. "I'm fine... They certainly put up a fight, though." Ryuko murmured, looking around at the "battlefield" of collapsed students, beaten and bruised.

Uzu nodded in agreement. "They did. But it's not like they stood a chance against the Northern Kanto Gang..." Uzu said. He breathed a soft sigh when he felt Ryuko sit up and rise to her feet. "Something the matter?" He asked quietly and rose to his feet as well.

The girl shook her head. "No, nothing... I was just wondering what high school you were planning on attending now that you're graduating from middle school." Ryuko muttered, dusting off her clothes.

Uzu raised a brow. "School?" He rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "Hnn... I've heard some good things about Hounnoji Academy." He murmured.

Ryuko made a soft humming sound. "Hn, Hounnoji Academy, huh? Maybe I'll transfer there too." Ryuko said before she turned to Uzu.

The green haired male chuckled. "Oh? Can't stand the thought of being apart from me, Matoi?" He teased. Ryuko shook her head and rolled her eyes.

"You know what, I've changed my mind. I don't think I'll go to Hounnoji Academy," she smirked at Uzu who feigned being hurt by her words. "I'm gonna head home, I'll see ya later,

shorty." Ryuko said, nimbly dodging Uzu when he swung his bamboo sword at her.

The boy with the wild green hair glared at his best friend. "Damn it, Mato! Come and say that to my face!" Uzu yelled, swinging at her again. Oh, how he hated it when Ryuko made fun of his height.

Ryuko smirked and ducked out of the way. She skipped backwards and shoved her hands into her pockets. "Ooh, sorry, Sanageyama. I couldn't possibly get that low to the ground, my clothes will get dirty!" She laughed, her smirk dancing on her lips. "I'll see ya tomorrow, Sanageyama!" She waved before heading off.

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Ryuko gasped, looking at the ruined front of her home. She gripped the letter in her hand tightly, the one from her father that requested her to come home. Her legs shook and her eyes were wide. "Dad..." Ryuko heard herself mutter. That seemed to snap her out of her trance and Ryuko hurried into the house.

"Dad! Dad!" Ryuko yelled and ran into the mansion, her eyes frantic as she tried to search for her father.

"Dad!" Ryuko yelled, searching every room in the house. "Da-" her voice caught in her throat, her eyes turning toward her father's study. Shakingly, she ran into the room and her heart stopped. Her father was on the floor a bloody, beaten mess, half a giant scissor blade sticking out of his abdomen.

Ryuko took in a shaky breath. "D-Dad?" She stammered.

Without a second thought, Ryuko ran over to his side. "Dad! Dad!" She yelled. She almost flinched when her father pulled her hand away from him.

"Ryuko," he breathed heavily, "If you want to live a peaceful life, just stand up and walk away." He breathed, his voice straining. Ryuko sat back in awe as her father pulled the oversized scissor blade out of his abdomen.

"But if you want to fight in my place..." His voice was strained and he looked over at his daughter. "Take this scissor blade!" He said, tossing the blade into her hand. Ryuko's eyes hardened as she tightened her hold on the blade in her hand.

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Uzu shoved his hands into his pockets, the setting sun was bugging his eyes from where he stood just outside the giant boxing ring. It's been a little more than two years since he's seen Ryuko, or even heard from her.

*I wonder how she's doing...*

Uzu shook his head, snapping himself out of his thoughts. He had something else to focus on right now. He had to focus on the fight with this new transfer student who dared to speak out

against Lady Satsuki. He watched on as the transfer student saved their friend, releasing her before moving to fight Takaharu Fukuroda, president of the boxing club.

The green haired male scoffed under his breath watching as the new transfer student took Fukuroda's hits like they were nothing. He's probably going to need a new training regimen for the boxing club. Uzu's eyes widened as he saw the transfer student's face enter his vision.

"Ry-" he bit his tongue, stopping himself. He knew that dark hair with the single red streak anywhere.

*Ryuko Matoi...* He chanced a glance over at Lady Satsuki before he turned back to the match just in time to see Ryuko's tattered cloak rip off her person.

Uzu bit his lip, his cheeks turning red. *What the hell is she wearing?!*

Uzu ran up to the ring, gripping the chains that surrounded the ring. His cheeks turned dark red, seeing his best friend dancing around the ring, nearly half naked. *What...*

He gaped in awe, seeing Ryuko's uniform break apart Fukuroda's special boxing glove like it was nothing more than a dirt clod. He didn't know that Ryuko was transferring here!

"I-Impossible!" He yelled as he watched Ryuko break the Goku uniform into shreds. He hadn't heard from her in a year!

He watched as Ryuko threw Fukuroda's body toward Lady Satsuki, some of the kid's blood splattering onto his lady's face.

Uzu furrowed his brows angrily as he began to climb up the ring. "How dare you!" He yelled. His anger wasn't from the fact that blood splattered on his Lady's face. His anger was from elsewhere. Lady Satsuki's voice snapped Uzu out of his trance, stopping him in his tracks. So he remained there, his eyes trained on Ryuko.

*She could have let me know.*

"This scissor blade was left behind by the person who killed my father!"

Uzu gripped the chains tightly. *Her father was dead?*

"We'll have a leisurely chat another day, Kiryuin Satsuki!" Uzu's head snapped up to Ryuko's retreating form as she jumped out of the ring, heading for the school's exit.

He jumped off the ring, gritting his teeth as he clenched his fists into hands. "D..." He sucked in a deep breath before he pointed towards Ryuko. "Don't let her get away!" He ordered.

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Uzu strode down the hall, his hands shoved in his pockets. He grit his teeth, still rather upset about the sudden turn of events that began a day ago. He blinked in surprise, finding the girl who was plaguing his thoughts no more than a couple feet in front of him. She was just

standing there, at her locker, looking through its insides. He clenched his fist inside his pocket before he strode over to her.

"Well if it isn't the new transfer student," Uzu said as he leaned against Ryuko's locker. She glared at him, and he almost admitted to himself that he kind of missed her glare. "Ryuko Matoi..." He trailed off, looking her up and down.

Ryuko did the same to him, her blue eyes looking him up and down. "Do I know you from somewhere?"

Uzu raised his brows in surprise. Was she messing with him? Was she giving him the cold shoulder? Did he piss her off, perhaps, and she was just holding a grudge against him for that? *No, she'd just beat me up if I pissed her off...*

Uzu paused before he spoke up. "Ahh... N-No, I don't... Think so?" He said slowly, gauging the girl's reaction. She didn't seem to react much, only giving him a look of disinterest.

"Is that all? If that's the case, I've got somewhere to be," Ryuko said, slamming her locker shut before she turned on her heel. Without thinking, Uzu reached out and grabbed her arm. Alarmed, Ryuko faced him and swung at him, only to have Uzu block her hit with ease.

She blinked in surprise. "Your moves are still predictable, I see." Uzu found himself saying. Ryuko nearly growled at him.

"Excuse me?" She hissed, ripping her arm from Uzu's grasp.

Uzu bit his lip. "Do... You really not know me, Ryu- Matoi?" he stopped himself and cleared his throat. "W-We're... Friends." He whispered the last part quietly, looking around suspiciously.

Ryuko raised her brow as she cocked her head to the side, examining the green haired male before her. "N-No. Believe me, I would think I'd remember having at least one friend growing up," Ryuko replied. She wiggled her hand free from Uzu's grasp. "Is that all?" She almost hissed.

Uzu bit his lip, looking faintly crestfallen. Something about Ryuko's reaction made him believe that she really was telling the truth, that she *didn't* remember him. Ryuko was never one to lie.

"Yeah... We're done here," Uzu grumbled as he shoved his hand back in his pocket and collected his composure. Ryuko furrowed her brows, curious about his reaction before she nodded and walked off. Uzu clicked his tongue against his teeth before he walked off as well.

*Does she really not remember me...?*

TBC.

## Chapter 2

### Chapter 2:

Uzu's grunts filled the room as he punched the sandbag suspended in his room. His headphones were in his ears, the music playing, and keeping his energy up and his focus on point. He was light on his feet, moving around on the balls of his feet and his toes, treating the sandbag as though it were his enemy. He grunted again as he jabbed at the sandbag, his jabs matching the beat of his music.

*Right, left... Right, left... Right, right, left...*

He gritted his teeth as his mind filled with thoughts of Ryuko. The whole point of his workout was to get his mind *off* of her.

What was she doing at Hounnoji?

He increased the speed of his punches, his brows furrowing in concentration.

*Right, left, right, left, right left, right, left...*

Why didn't he hear anything from her for the past few years?

He rolled his eyes. That wasn't all her fault, he wasn't the best when it came to long distance communication...

*Right, left, right...*

From what he could tell, she hadn't really changed. Even her fighting style was the same. His brows softened slightly as he thought back to how Ryuko looked when she was fighting Fukuroda. She was light on her feet, she always had been. She was lithe, nimble, fierce, powerful. She owned that boxing ring as though it was Fukuroda that was stepping into *her* territory, not the other way around. Her battle replayed over and over in his mind, as he memorized her reckless attack patterns, the way she looked while she was battled, the way her body moved...

Uzu flushed, catching himself when he realized that his thoughts started to focus less on how Ryuko moved, but more on how Ryuko *looked* when she moved. Angered and absolutely embarrassed with where his thoughts were going, Uzu punched the sandbag with all his might.

"Where the hell did that outfit come from?!" He yelled at no one, watching as he sent the sandbag flying off its hook. It hit the wall nearby as a rip opened up in the center of the bag, the sand spilling out and onto the floor. Uzu ran a hand angrily through his hair, thinking back to how all the males watching looked at Ryuko as though she were a piece of meat. Uzu clenched his fist angrily. Oh, how he wanted to punch all their skulls in for looking at Ryuko like that.



Uzu breathed heavily as he turned to the mess he had just made. *Damn, I'll have to clean that up later...* He thought as he undid the gauze around his hands and removed his headphones from his ears. He made a mental note to thank Inumuta for the playlist, it did wonders to help him with his workout.

Tiredly, Uzu walked over to the nearby chair where he had left his towel. He picked it up, using it to wipe the sweat off his face, his mind once again going to Ryuko. He shook his head as he sat down on the chair, exhausted. He could think about Ryuko later, he had other things to worry about, like his athletic clubs or worrying about Lady Satsuki and the Elite Four finding out about his past with Ryuko.

*She's the enemy now, it wouldn't be good for her or me if the others found out about us...* He thought tiredly before he headed for the shower, deciding to get ready for bed.

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Uzu watched, his hands in his pockets, as Omiko Hakodate served, her tennis ball tearing through the steel target like it was nothing more than a wet paper towel. "Good work, Hakodate," he complimented. She had improved greatly, no doubt thanks to the special two star uniform that was given to her from Lady Satsuki.

"Thank you, sir. It's all thanks to this tennis-spec Goku uniform," Hakodate said, another tennis ball in hand.

*Called it...* he thought with a mental roll of his eyes. It was almost always like this. Every student worked their hardest in order to receive a Goku uniform. That's all they ever sought after, greedy punks. Uzu was no better, he was personally given a three star Goku uniform. He was practically handed the life of luxury.

With another roll of his eyes, Uzu turned his attention to the side where the other members of the tennis club were practicing. "What's that?" Uzu asked, watching as the other tennis club members were hitting another member with tennis balls, a no star member, he noted. *Mako Mankanshoku...* He immediately recognized the girl as Ryuko's only friend here. *Besides me... But apparently she doesn't even seem to acknowledge my existence,* He thought bitterly.

"We have an unmotivated club member," Hakodate spoke up, snapping Uzu out of his trance. "We're purging her since she missed mandatory practice the other day," she explained.

Uzu blinked as he watched Mankanshoku get pelted by tennis balls. *The other day?* He thought, his mind going to the boxing match... Where she was used as hostage to draw out Ryuko...

*Oops,* he thought as he bit his lip. He looked over at Hakodate. He should probably bring up that there was a special reason that Mankanshoku wasn't at tennis practice. He looked at the menacing tennis racket in Hakodate's hand. Uzu gulped nervously, he'd really prefer to not be on the receiving end of that racket...

"Ah, Ryuko-chan!"

Uzu and Hakodate turned to Mankanshoku. They saw Ryuko standing there, blocking the tennis balls with her guitar case. Uzu grit his teeth, his eyes widening just faintly as the tennis club members stopped firing. "Well, if it isn't the transfer student," he spoke up, Ryuko's attention turning to Hakodate and Uzu. Immediately, Uzu noticed the red glove on Ryuko's left hand. It was a little gaudy, but it fit Ryuko oddly enough.

Hakodate walked up to Ryuko, slinging her oversized tennis racket over her shoulder. "Come for another beating, transfer student?" She challenged.

Ryuko hopped down from where Mankanshoku was tied to the post. "As if!" Ryuko yelled, glaring at Hakodate. "This time, I'm gonna kick all your asses!" She yelled. Uzu almost smirked at Ryuko's words. It was just like Ryuko to not give up, not even after being beaten.

His brows rose in curiosity as he watched Ryuko rip the pin from her glove. "Let's go, Senketsu!" She yelled. Uzu raised his brow.

*Senketsu?*

She was swallowed up by her uniform before she transformed into her rather...revealing uniform from the other day. Uzu bit his lip, suppressing the blush that threatened to cross his face.

Hakodate scoffed. "That looks both painful and embarrassing, you exhibitionist," She taunted.

Ryuko flushed, glaring at Uzu and Hakodate. "Oh, bite me! I'm not an exhibitionist!" She yelled.

Hakodate scoffed again, squeezing the tennis ball in her hand. Uzu peeked over his shoulder to see that the other club members had lined up behind them. "Let's begin!" Hakodate yelled, tossing the tennis ball into the air. "110 million serve!" She swung, a barrage of tennis balls flying towards Ryuko. Without batting an eye, Ryuko reached behind her to pull the scissor blade from her guitar case. She flicked her wrist, directing the sharp edge of the blade toward the tennis balls before she swung. The tennis balls landed around her harmlessly before the broke into shreds as Ryuko remained untouched.

Mentally, Uzu smirked. She was fast, she always was. He sighed under his breath. Ah, but he can't compliment his enemy, now can he?

"Fault! You're disqualified, transfer student!" He called to her, crossing his arms over his chest.

"What?" She asked, her face giving the impression that she was both upset and confused.

"True, you evaded Hakodate's attack, but slicing the balls in half is against the rules!" Uzu said. "You may have won the fight, but you have lost the match!"

Ryuko looked at him wide eyed before she cocked her head to the side. "Huh?" She asked, looking the definition of confused.

Uzu almost laughed at her. He cleared his throat and furrowed his brows. "Listen up!" He yelled, nodding to the tennis court that Ryuko was standing on. "You're standing on a tennis court, which means you didn't win according to the rules of tennis!"

Ryuko gave him an incredulous look. "Huh? But what about the other day?! Why are you getting all picky now?!"

Uzu scoffed, turning his head away from Ryuko. "That was the other day!"

"This is ridiculous! What about boxing when we-"

"It doesn't matter! You're disqualified!" Uzu had to force an upset look on his face. This bickering with Ryuko really brought back memories of when they would fight back in middle school.

"No, she won!" Uzu and Hakodate turned back to Ryuko just in time to see Mankanshoku magically free herself from her ropes. The brunette stood beside Ryuko and pointed to her friend. "Ryuko-chan rescued me! She won friendship which means she won at life! But if you're going to insist that Ryuko-chan lost, then you leave her no choice!" Mankanshoku yelled, bringing out a tennis racket and giving it to Ryuko.

"She'll win! Ryuko-chan will win at tennis! Even tennis!" Uzu and Ryuko froze, their faces showing the same level of confusion. What the hell just happened?

Beside Uzu, Hakodate scoffed, seemingly unfazed by what just transpired. "Hoh? So what you're saying is you want to fight me, Tennis Club captain Omiko Hakodate, in a tennis match?"

Uzu and Ryuko snapped out of their trances before Ryuko smirked. "Yeah, let's get started!"

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Uzu bit his lip, standing from the top of his podium, as he looked down at the tennis court where Ryuko and Hakodate were to have their match. Ryuko wasn't doing too good. Her regular tennis racket was no match against whatever the hell it was that Hakodate was using. Uzu looked back at the scoreboard behind him. *40 to nothin' huh?*

He looked down just in time to see Ryuko catch her scissor blade that Mako had thrown in from the sidelines. Ryuko took a thread and wrapped in numerous times around the handle of her scissor blade. Ah, that can't be allowed... Uzu glanced over at Hakodate's ridiculous excuse for a tennis racket.

Then again, that one shouldn't be allowed either...

After a moment, Uzu blew on his whistle. "Faul-" he stopped, a bright light stopping him.

He looked behind him to see Satsuki standing at the top of her tower. "It's alright. Play along, Hakodate." She said. *It seems Lady Satsuki has given her blessing*, Uzu thought with amusement as he and Hakodate bowed before they turned back to the match at hand, Ryuko

appearing to be pissed. Gritting her teeth, Ryuko served the ball aggressively only for it to be returned by Hakodate.

*She struggled*, Uzu noticed as he watched the ball was returned by Ryuko, sending Hakodate flying and then back to Ryuko. Quickly, Ryuko switched which direction she held the blade and swung at Hakodate, tearing the two-star uniform to shreds. A horn blared, signaling that the match was over and that Ryuko was the victor. She did pretty well.

*Don't congratulate her, don't congratulate her...* Uzu thought as he hopped down from his podium to stand across from Ryuko. He furrowed his brows at her, making himself look absolutely peeved. He had good reason to be too, another one of his athletic clubs was beaten with ease despite his rigorous training regimen. "Don't get too full of yourself, bitch," he growled at her. He knew Ryuko hated it when she was called that. Surely that had to elicit *some* kind of reaction from her.

She growled and turned to him, shooting him a glare. "What the hell did you say to me?" She hissed out, teeth grit. Uzu shot her a glare right back. *Bingo*.

She has to recognize him now, right?

"Wait, Sanageyama." Uzu almost flinched and turned around to find Satsuki striding down the steps, looking the epitome of grace and elegance. He and the other students parted the way for her. "The victor of this match is that girl," she declared, a smug look on her face.

"Lady Satsuki," he bowed to her, his head low.

Ryuko smirked, getting into a fighting stance. "Well? Are you going to tell me? Are you the scissor blade woman?" Ryuko gasped as Satsuki swung her blade at her, leaving cuts in her Kamui.

"If you want to ask a question, ask with your skill," Satsuki said, also getting into a fighting position.

Ryuko grit her teeth as Satsuki charged at her, her Bakuzan in hand. Ryuko dug her heels into the ground and held her scissor blade up to block Satsuki's attack. At this point, it was all that she could do to, she was in no condition to fight. In a release of steam, Ryuko retreated back alongside Mako, the former declaring that she'd defeat Satsuki next time.

Finally, Uzu stood to his feet and approached Satsuki from behind. "Forgive me, Lady Satsuki. I underestimated the transfer student." He said, his brows furrowed.

"Hn. Hakodate is to be demoted to a no-star. As for Hokkaido, set up an inter league match with the sumo club," Satsuki ordered, sheathing her sword.

"I'll remember this day, Ryuko Matoi." Uzu heard her say.

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Uzu grunted, shielding his face from the strong winds. It was incredible, really, just how strong those two were. Strong enough to create wind just from sheer willpower. As the wind

died down, Uzu turned to the match at hand, the duel between Ryuko and Lady Satsuki.

He watched as Ryuko was sent flying across the campus. He winced as Ryuko was sent crashing into a building. Ryuko didn't stand a chance against Lady Satsuki. His eyes flicked to the other end of the building where Ryuko came crashing out. At this rate, those two would destroy the school. His eyes widened just subtly as Ryuko transformed back into her regular school uniform, looking absolutely exhausted before Satsuki picked her up by the hair and tossed her aside like a rag doll.

Before Satsuki could land another hit on Ryuko, Mankanshoku appeared in the middle of their match. "Get naked, Ryuko-chan!" She yelled, acting as a divider between Ryuko and Satsuki. Acting out...whatever point she was trying to get across. "Don't be embarrassed! Just rip it off and get naked!" She yelled, finishing her ridiculously dramatic speech.

Uzu blanched, his brow twitching. *This girl is something else...* He snapped out of his stupor just in time to see Ryuko block Satsuki's hit, even being able to push Satsuki back just a little. *Ryuko...* He thought in amazement as Ryuko transformed once again, her Kamui looking just slightly different than before as she radiated an aura of confidence and strength.

Ryuko charged forward, her blade clashing repeatedly with Satsuki's. They were matched evenly until it was Satsuki who was the one who could only guard and dodge the attacks. "Scissor blade! Decapitation mode!" Ryuko yelled, her scissor blade extending as she swung at Satsuki.

Satsuki dodged, just barely, but nearly half the wall behind her was almost taken out with a single blow. They charged again, Satsuki adopting a new aura of strength as their blows clashed, each one creating a new wave of destruction.

At this point, Uzu was almost sure that the school would be destroyed.

They clashed once more, creating an even larger wave of destruction so strong that it almost completely cleared the school grounds. Uzu grit his teeth, digging his feet into the ground as he and the other Elite Four members did what they could to withstand the blow. When the smoke finally cleared, Uzu looked up to see two lone figures standing at the heart of the destruction. He noticed one figure fall to their knees, and he immediately recognized it as Ryuko.

"I'm gonna crush them," he registered Ryuko say.

"What?" Satsuki replied.

"I don't know what you're talking about, but I'm gonna take all that lofty crap you spout about ambition and aspirations, and crush every last one of 'em." Ryuko smirked up at Satsuki.

"That oughta loosen your lips up a little,"

Satsuki scoffed before she turned and climbed up her stairs. "How amusing. You're going to crush my ambitions, are you?" She asked before turning on her heel to look down at Ryuko. "Hounnoji Academy is my kingdom! If you say you will topple it all by yourself, then I

accept your challenge! Beginning tomorrow, all clubs will be after your head!" She said as the Elite Four acted as a barrier between her and Ryuko.

Satsuki smirked as she looked down at Ryuko. "Do you still think you can win?"

Ryuko scoffed as she rose to her feet. "You bet your ass I do." She shot back, pointing her blade at Satsuki.

"As you wish. Then defeat each and every one student who comes after you! If you do, Junketsu and I will face you again."

"And if I win, you're gonna tell me everything."

"We're agreed, then."

"You're on," Ryuko said, her eyes ablaze.

Satsuki smirked once more before she ascended up the stairs, the other Elite Four members slowly following behind her. Uzu was the last to go, his eyes locked with Ryuko's hardened ones. *Ryuko...* He turned and followed the others up the stairs, his hands shoved into his pockets. *You're definitely something else,* He thought, a smirk crossing his lips.

TBC.

## Chapter 3

### Chapter 3:

Uzu scoffed as he kicked his feet onto the table in front of him, draping his arms over the back of the couch. It was pathetic, really, watching that Maiko girl *blatantly* try to hold Ryuko back. It was almost comedic. Uzu flushed as that Maiko girl *tripped* and bared Ryuko's panties to the world... Again.

*What is this girl's game?* Uzu thought to himself taking a sip of his water.

"SANAGEYAMA," Uzu choked on his water, as he pounded his fist against his chest to try and clear his throat.

Uzu turned and wiped his mouth on the back of his hand. "Jeez, Gamagoori... Don't sneak up on people like that..." Uzu grumbled, turning to the largest member of the Elite Four.

Gamagoori frowned. "Sanageyama, if you have nothing better to do that to kick back and relax, why don't you do that elsewhere? We're quite busy here with No-late day as you can tell." Gamagoori said, gesturing to the screens that were showing the progress of the no-star students' climb to Hounnoji.

Uzu rolled his neck and got up to his feet. "Right, right. I know when I'm not wanted..." Uzu said as he shoved his hands into his pockets and headed for the exit. "Good luck with...whatever it is that you're doing, Gamagoori." Uzu said, waving over his shoulder.

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"Hey, wild monkey!"

Uzu peeked over his shoulder, his brow twitching, and saw Jakuzure and Inumuta heading in his direction. He turned back to the straw dummy he was using as a practice dummy before he started to strike it with his bamboo sword. "How can I help you, little miss Jakuzure?" Uzu asked, his focus mostly on the strikes he was making and not on his surprise visitors.

"Does the name 'Ryuko Matoi' ring any bells to you?" Inumuta asked.

Uzu paused, stopping himself mid swing before he continued on like nothing had happened. "The transfer student, right?" Uzu asked, feigning ignorance.

"Lady Satsuki asked me to do a little digging on our mysterious new transfer student. Turns out she went to the same middle school as you. She was even in a gang, like you." Inumuta brought up, his fingers dancing over the screen of his phone.

Uzu grit his teeth, his strikes becoming stronger with each passing second. "Really? I didn't know that," Uzu said through clenched teeth. Uzu finally stopped out of exhaustion as he turned to Jakuzure and Inumuta.

"You suck at lying, monkey." Jakuzure said, narrowing her eyes at the green haired male. "Should we be worried about you switching loyalties?" She challenged, crossing her arms over her petite body.

Uzu glared at her, but before he had a chance to respond, Inumuta chimed in. "Whatever past you have with the transfer student, you're going to need to forget about it. She is Lady Satsuki's enemy now." Inumuta advised, glancing over the rim of his glasses to look at Uzu.

The green haired male rolled his eyes. "You don't have to worry about me switching loyalties. I've sworn my allegiance to Lady Satsuki, just like the rest of you." Uzu grumbled, turning back to the straw dummy. He returned to striking the dummy, mentally repeating, "MEN, DOU, KOTE" in his head.

"So you don't care about her in the least?" Jakuzure asked, and Uzu could practically see the smirk growing on her face.

"No, I don't,"

"Well then, I suppose you don't care to know that the transfer student and her friend made to homeroom on time and that they won't be expelled from Hounnoji." Inumuta said.

"How nice," Uzu rolled his eyes, his strikes becoming stronger.

"And that Maiko Ogure student has been expelled from Hounnoji, for trying to steal the transfer student's Kamui and for planning to use it to overthrow Lady Satsuki." Inumuta added.

*So that was her game...* He thought. "Tch, like that girl could even stand a chance against Lady Satsuki, even with that Kamui." He said, striking the straw dummy on the head. When he didn't hear a response afterward, Uzu stopped and turned around, wiping his brow free of sweat. He looked around, not finding Jakuzure or Inumuta anywhere in the room.

He clenched his fist and turned back to the straw dummy he had nearly mangled during his practice. *Do they know?*

---

Uzu walked into the meeting room, his hands shoved into his pockets. Inumuta was off in his corner, typing away at his laptop. Gamagoori was standing by Uzu's couch. Jakuzure was on her couch, grumbling to herself and munching on some pocky. Keeping his eyes on Jakuzure curiously, Uzu walked over to Inumuta.

"Something wrong with Jakuzure?" Uzu asked, nudging the blue haired male.

"Yes, there's something wrong!" Jakuzure hissed, biting down on her pocky angrily. "Some person attack my gardening club! It wasn't that damn transfer student, either!"

The pink haired girl turned her attention to Inumuta. "Doggy," Inumuta and Uzu turned to Jakuzure, quite surprised with the drastic change in her mood. "Find out what you can about



the jerk who attacked my club." Jakuzure said, calming herself down as she nibbled on her pocky.

The doors to the meeting room opened as Satsuki entered the room, Soroi right behind her. She strode over to her chair and sat down, already a cup of tea in hand thanks to Soroi. "Inumuta," she said after sipping her tea.

Inumuta nodded. "Yes, my lady." He said, turning to his computer as Uzu retreated to his couch and kicked his feet up on the table. "Regarding the intruder who attacked the garden club today, his data matches the Anti-Uniform Guerrilla we've had trouble with before." Inumuta shared.

With the click of a button, Inumuta had put up a biography of a man with a red mohawk on the screen behind where Satsuki was sitting. "Anti-Uniform Guerrilla?" Gamagoori piped up, his brows furrowing. "The man who has been attacking our affiliated academies?"

The blue haired male nodded before he clicked another button on his computer. "This is the weapon that he uses," he said as a diagram of sewing needles appeared on the screen.

"Analysis has revealed that these needles are composed of a special alloy, and they have the ability to sever the connection between a human body and life fibers," the dog explained, pushing his glasses further up his nose.

Uzu sunk back in his couch, a smug look crossing his face. "How impudent, a weapon that can counteract a Goku Uniform," he said.

"So it means that *those* fools sent him," Gamagoori grumbled, tucking his arms behind his back. "Those fools who dare to oppose Hounnoji Academy," he said. Uzu nodded in agreement, his head rolling back to rest on the couch.

Inumuta tapped away at his computer. "However, his target this time appears to be Ryuko Matoi." He reported.

*What?!* Uzu snapped his eyes open as he and the other members of the Elite Four turned to the dog.

"Matoi?" Gamagoori piped up. Uzu bit the inside of his cheek. What could that Anti-Uniform Guerrilla want with Ryuko?

"So it's the Kamui he's after," Satsuki spoke up as she was poured a fresh cup of tea. "In that case, this is nothing more than a struggle between sandpaper and a clam."

Uzu looked to Lady Satsuki before he dropped his gaze to his lap, his thumbs twiddling beneath the cloth of his pockets. *Was he after her because of that weird outfit she wore? That Kamui of hers?* He clicked his tongue. He can't do anything to help Ryuko, she was going to have to get out of this herself.

"The Non-Athletic Committee will see to this." Jakuzure spoke up as she sat up from her couch that was decorated in stuffed animals. The pink haired girl turned to Satsuki, a cross

between a smirk and a smile on the smaller girl's face. "If I may, Lady Satsuki?" She chirped.

Satsuki looked down at her tea. "As you wish," she granted.

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Uzu bit his cheek as he tried to appear indifferent to the live feed on the screen. He was late to the screening, only able to catch the last few moments before the mohawk guy disappeared through an explosion.

"Inumuta, status of the Anit-Uniform Guerrilla's combat data," Satsuki said as she and the remaining members of the Elite four turned to the live feed of Jakuzure's battle.

"Analysis is complete. I was able to deduce a pattern." The dog reported.

"Very well. I'm glad that Jakuzure understood what my true intent was." Satsuki said as she stood to her feet. "Thank her for her trouble," she said as she left the room. The door closed behind Satsuki and Uzu rose to his feet, deciding that he had to at least try and see if Ryuko was alright. He knew that the damn girl had gotten into a fight with the mohawk guy, she wasn't one to run from a fight.

"Sanageyama?" Gamagoori asked as the green haired male walked toward the exit.

"I'm heading home, I had a long day." Uzu announced before the door closed behind him. He looked around to see no one in sight before he strode down the hall, his eyes searching for any sign of Ryuko or that damn mohawk guy. He turned the corner just in time to see the mohawk guy climb into the hallway from the window at the end of the hall. The man landed on his feet. Ryuko, dressed in only her underwear, was tossed carelessly onto his shoulder like a sack of flour while the man held her school uniform - her Kamui - in his other hand.

Uzu grit his teeth and headed for the man, his hand on his bamboo sword. "What the hell did you do to her?" Uzu hissed through clenched teeth, tightening his hold on his bamboo sword.

The man glared down at Uzu, his brows furrowing. "Do you know this girl?"

"Of course, I do! She's my- She's a damn student here!" Uzu practically growled. "I won't ask again." He growled, as he began to pull out his bamboo sword.

The man furrowed his brows. "I see," he grumbled.

Uzu was about to ask what until the man suddenly handed Ryuko, quite literally dropping the girl in his arms. Uzu bit his lip, as he cradled Ryuko in his arms. Uzu looked down at Ryuko, his eyes filling with concern. He sighed in relief, noticing that she was only passed out, most likely from exhaustion. "What are you-" Uzu looked up just in time to see the mohawk man exit out the same window he came through before disappearing from Uzu's sight, the Kamui still in his hands.

Uzu blinked in confusion before he turned to look down at Ryuko, holding her tightly against his chest. "Ryuko..." He breathed, his fingers tightening his hold on her.

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Uzu yawned as he looked down and flexed his hand, the same one he used to hold Ryuko close when the Anti-Uniform Guerrilla had handed her over...*willingly*.

He looked up at the bed where Ryuko was laying, her soft breaths filling the room. He had brought her to the nurse's office shortly after the meeting with the Anti-Uniform Guerrilla. He had no idea where else to bring her, he couldn't possibly bring her back to his place, that would definitely bring up rumors between he and Ryuko. Also, it may cause Satsuki and the Elite Four to be suspicious.

*Actually, they'd still be suspicious, considering that I brought her here...* Uzu thought, his brows furrowing. He turned back to Ryuko, his eyes softening somewhat. He reached his hand forward but hesitated when it was just an inch or so from her forehead. Uzu bit his lip, noticing the way that his hand was shaking. He took a deep breath before his fingertips brushed against Ryuko's hair, brushing some of it from her face.

*Ryuko...* His eyes fell down to her shoulder, noticing that it was bare. His eyes widened and his cheeks flushed, remembering that he was holding her half naked body extremely close to his just moments ago. He bit his lip and stood to his feet.

"Shit! Her uniform!" He yelled. He was so focused on Ryuko's well being that he totally forgot about the uniform that the mohawk guy was holding! The same uniform that caused that mohawk guy to come here in the first place!

"Umm," Uzu flinched and turned around to find a shaggy, blue haired teacher with sunglasses. *Mikisugi, Ryuko's homeroom teacher...* Uzu immediately recognized him. Uzu looked down and noticed that the teacher was holding a dark blue uniform in his hand before the teacher moved it behind his back, noticing that Uzu was eyeing it.

"May I ask what happened here?" He asked, moving closer to Ryuko.

Subconsciously, Uzu stepped between him and the bed, prevent any further advancement. "I found her like this," Uzu said, his eyes locked with Mikisugi's sunglasses. "I was took her here when I noticed she was injured..." Uzu said.

"I see," Mikisugi said. "Well how about I take over? School is long over, young man, don't you have to head home?" He asked.

Uzu clicked his tongue, eyeing Mikisugi suspiciously. "Don't worry, young man. I have no ill intentions with this girl. I just want to make sure she makes a full recovery is all," Mikisugi said, holding his hands up in a placating manner.

Uzu eased his stance, finally relaxing his fists that he had subconsciously been clenching. "Right..." Uzu said, his eyes flicking back to Ryuko.

"When your girlfriend makes a full recovery, I'll be sure that you are the first to know."

The green haired male flushed and turned to Mikisugi, stammering incomprehensibly. "I-I-I, n-no... I- She isn't... We're..." Uzu stammered as he pointed between Ryuko and himself unintelligently. He stopped himself when he noticed the knowing smirk on Mikisugi's face, as if the teacher knew something that he didn't. Uzu cleared his throat, his face still very much red. "Er, th-thank you, sir." Uzu mumbled before he quickly took his leave.

As he left, Uzu made a mental note to check up on Ryuko the next day.

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Uzu left the sewing club's room, heading down the hall, his hands tucked into his pockets as usual. He spotted another figure on the opposite side of the hall, heading the opposite direction of him, the red streak in her hair quite noticeable. *Ryuko...* He thought, a smirk on his lips. *Looks like she has made a full recovery...* He thought, his smirk dancing on his lips.

He hardened his eyes as he headed for Lady Satsuki's room. "Now then..." He murmured to himself as he collected his thoughts.

*It's time to get her back.*

---

"Let me fight, Matoi." Uzu requested, a smug look on his face. To him, it seemed like the only logical way to bring his Ryu- Uzu shook his head.

To bring back Ryuko. He missed his childhood friend and he at least wished she would remember him, even the tiniest bit. "Why?" Satsuki asked.

Uzu almost chuckled. Almost. "Need you even ask? I think you know full well what happens when I see someone powerful," Uzu said.

"Just like three years ago then?" Satsuki asked.

Uzu chuckled under his breath as he thought back to when he and Satsuki had battled. His gang of 500 against just her. He was cocky back then, just a punk who thought he could take on the entire world. Ryuko was there with him that day, for that he was kind of grateful. She wasn't there to see his pitiful loss. But then again, Satsuki was a formidable opponent then, she still is now.

"I can't lose, not while I have these eyes," Uzu said, pointing to his eyes, his greatest strength and the key to his victory against Ryuko. "If I win, treat me to tea or something," Uzu replied once Satsuki had given him the green light to battle Ryuko.

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Uzu could barely hold back a grin from where he stood in the center of sports gym 1. He had been waiting for this moment for a while. His heart pounded in his chest. He couldn't wait to fight her again. How long had it been since they've fought?

"So you've come, Matoi," Uzu said with a grin as he looked up at the entrance. The sea of students parted, revealing Ryuko at the door, a cocky smile on her face. He'd know that look anywhere, she was most likely just as excited he was.

Ryuko strode into the room, her smirk dancing on her lips. "I was called out by name by one of the Elite Four. I couldn't run away from that, could I?" She shot back.

Uzu smirked. *Just like her*, He thought. "I like your spirit! Let's get right to it then!" He said as he and Ryuko transformed into their Blade Regalia and Kamui Senketsu, respectively. Quick on her feet and obviously showing how excited she was for battle, Ryuko charged forward and sliced repeatedly at Uzu.

*Hasty as usual*, he thought, grinning as he appeared behind the startled Ryuko. *But she's improved*.

She glared at him and turned on her heel before she lunged at him, her scissor blade in hand. "Why you!" She yelled, swinging at him again. Uzu smirked behind his mask, dodging her every attack with ease. He clenched his fist before he attacked Ryuko, his shinai hitting her repeatedly and sending her flying across the room.

*But she isn't the only one who has improved*,

"I can see all your moves!" Uzu yelled. He stood in his spot, watching as Ryuko ran circles around him at her full speed. Uzu almost chuckled. Oh, how he had missed battling her.

*Did she miss this too?*

Uzu braced his legs before he sped off, easily keeping up with Ryuko's pace as he bonked each of her "clones" on top of the head.

"No matter how quickly you move, you can't escape my blade!" Uzu taunted. "Behold! Secret weapon: Higi tengantsu!" His eyes astute to her every move.

"As long as I have these eyes, I can anticipate any move my opponent makes!" Uzu smirked, as he attacked with his shinai, leaving no time for Ryuko to retaliate, only guard. She was going to need to do better than that. He reached onto the pack behind him to attach a shinai to each of his mechanical fingers.

"Let's see how you handle this!" He said, changing his attack pattern. "Shinsoku senbozuki!"

He attacked, able to pass through her defenses. All she was able to do now was take his hits. "I've read all your blocking moves now, too!" He finally stopped his attack, and Ryuko collapsed to the floor.

"Come now, it's over already? That's a little disappointing, don't you think?" He taunted. Ryuko was never one to accept defeat.

Uzu smirked as Ryuko stood to her feet, albeit struggling as she did so. *That's my girl*,

"That's more like it!" Uzu complimented, his grin widening. He missed the rush of fighting her. She always made a worthy rival, making every second in battle with her a big adrenaline rush. He watched carefully as Ryuko got into a defensive position, her eyes hard, as he attacked again. He knocked her blade out of her hand, her blade flying across the room.

"You're mine!" He stopped short as his vision blacked out.

*What?* He moved his hands to his eyes. He was still conscious so...? *What just happened?*

"They won't come off!" Uzu yelled, clawing for the cloth to come off. "M-My eyes!" He yelled. He dropped his shinai, using his mechanical fingers to remove the cloth.

"Now!" He heard Ryuko yell.

*What was going on?* He couldn't see a damn thing.

"Finishing move: Sen-I-soshitsu!" Suddenly, Uzu felt the clothes being torn from his person. After a blinding white light, he found himself back in the gym room, Ryuko and Mako staring down at him in his naked form.

*What just happened?* He looked up at Ryuko, gauging her expression. *Does she remember me?* His eyes met hers.

But he found nothing. No sense of familiarity, no sense of realization. She simply looked at him as another loser. Just another opponent. Just another peon who stood between her and Satsuki.

Uzu grit his teeth and he grabbed his shinai. He stood to his feet, glaring at her, his eyes hard. "This isn't over yet!" He yelled pointing his shinai at Ryuko. "I can still fight! Come on, Mato! Fight me again! I won't give up! Not until you-!" Uzu yowled in pain as he felt a whip hit his body numerous times.

"Don't be pathetic, Sanageyama!" Gamagoori barked from the stands as Uzu fell to his knees.

*Why?* Uzu dug his fist into the floor of the gym as Gamagoori continued to reprimand him in front of the student body. Uzu could care less though. His thoughts were on the girl he had just faced in a match. *Why?* He got careless, again. He relied too much on his eyesight, he knows it. He was so sure he was going to beat Ryuko, that after reading her attack patterns and memorizing it, he would be able to beat her. He was so sure that beating her would make her memory return.

How foolish of him to believe some stupid fight would magically bring back his best friend's memories.

Uzu grit his teeth, his head hung low. His emotions were too out of control, he needed to calm himself. But things are easier said than done.

*Why can't she remember me?*

---

He couldn't explain the sensation. He couldn't actually see... But he could still *see*. It was an odd sensation to him, but it really was an amazing experience. He had never seen the world more clearly than he could now. Things were clearer, crisper, he noticed more than he ever could relying solely on eyesight.

There was just *more* that he could see now that his eyes were gone. "Watch closely what happens when you force a man to change." He said, voice cold and distant. He transformed into his Blade Regalia MKII while Ryuko transformed into her Kamui Senketsu.

*Hasty*, was Uzu's brief thought as Ryuko began to make her move, already covering up the eyes that he no longer relied on. She charged at him, but Uzu intercepted with almost no effort, surprising Ryuko as she was sent tumbling to the ground.

He was *pissed*.

The cloth fell from Uzu's eyes, finally revealing to Ryuko that he had sealed them shut before their rematch. His overconfidence was what made him lose. Seeing Ryuko, memories of her and her flooding his brain, is what made him lose. Their match was far too personal for him, he had put too much riding on the outcome of the battle.

Uzu scoffed mentally. He bet the return of his best friend's memory on his *victory* in battle. That kind of stuff only happens in fairy tales. Ryuko could care less what this battle meant to him. To her, this battle was just another stepping stone on the path to getting one step closer to Satsuki.

She didn't give a rat's ass about *him*. And it made him sick knowing that she could care less while he remained in the background, watching her and hoping that maybe one day she would just *remember*.

*Maybe not actually seeing her would ease the pain of her not remembering him*, He had reasoned to himself when he asked Iori to see his eyes shut. It was a stupid reason, he wasn't fooling anyone. That damn girl was permanently burned into his brain and heart.

And she had *no* idea.

Uzu finally turned to Ryuko as she rose to her feet. "Here I come." He said, his voice like ice. He walked to her, each step more menacing than the next as he completely towered over Ryuko, who remained still, her eyes wide.

*She's scared*. he thought as he neared her. *Good*.

He raised his bamboo sword. "Men!" Ryuko blocked his hit.

"Dou!" She blocked again.

"Kote!" Another block.

"You're terrified, aren't you, Matoi?" It was more of an assumption than a question. He attacked again, Ryuko just barely able to block. "Your breathing. The smell of your sweat. I can see the inner workings of your mind as clear as day." Uzu said.

Uzu applied a little more pressure, causing Ryuko to grunt under his strength. "I can see it far, far more clearly than I ever could with my eyes. Everything about this world!" Uzu declared, his voice still cold and distant.

*Shingatsu.*

Uzu charged forward, knocking Ryuko off balance. Now was his chance.

"Men! Dou! Kote! Men! Dou! Kote! Men! Dou! Kote!" He yelled, landing blow after blow. "Men! Dou! Kote! Men! Dou! Kote!" Each strike hit her on point. She was his, she was defenseless against him as he tossed her around the arena like a rag doll.

His final hit knocked her into the ground, spreading cracks in the arena as her scissor blade flew out of her hand. "Without your weapon, you have no means of turning the tables this time." Uzu stated.

At this rate, he could kill her.

"So you'd think, right?" Ryuko choked out.

*Just like her, not giving up.* He thought, devoid of his usual admiration for Ryuko's resolve. He watched as Ryuko sent her scissor blade flying at him with the aid of a thread. *Useless.* He spat mentally as he dodged without much effort.

He reappeared behind her, nearly startling the girl. "I thought I told you that I could see the entire world. Did you think your pathetic little trick would work?" He shot menacingly. He swung at her, his shinai in hand.

"Men! Dou! Kote!" He yelled, striking her and increasing the speed of his strikes with each repeated cycle.

He could really kill her at this rate.

"MEN!" He shouted, landing the last blow on Ryuko as she fell to the floor, her body almost entirely buried in the ground except for her shoulders and head.

He was a danger. To both her and himself right now. He needed to calm down.

He twitched, as he raised his shinai to the sky, both of his hands wielding his weapon of choice.

He needed to stop the battle now.

"It's all over."

"Uz-"

His armor was swallowed up by a brilliant light before Uzu suddenly found himself back in his regular Goku uniform, his Blade Regalia MKII no longer donned. "What? What happened?" He asked as he dropped his shinai to his side.



"The Goku uniform overheated!" Iori yelled from the sidelines.

Grunting, Uzu turned his attention back in front of him to find an empty hole tunneling deeper into the ground and toward Hounnoji Academy's exit, Ryuko was nowhere in sight.

"Uz-"

Uzu dropped his head. Had he been hearing things? Was it just his imagination?

"This was no disgrace, Sanageyama." Satsuki said, snapping Uzu back into reality. "It was the result of your power outstripping that of the Goku Uniform's." She reasoned.

Uzu clenched his fist. Right now, he could care less about his Goku uniform overheating on him. "Yes, ma'am."

*Has she remembered?*

TBC.

## Chapter 4

Chapter 4:

"Graah!" Uzu punched the sandbag, his teeth grit angrily. The sandbag flew off its hinges and hit the wall nearby, a rip tearing in the center of the sandbag. As it fell to the floor, the sand spilled out.

That's the second one he broke just this week.

Exhausted, Uzu sat down on a nearby chair as he ran his hands through his hair. "Calm down..." He murmured to himself as he brushed his fingertips against the green bandana tied over his eyes. *Did she really remember me?* He thought to himself, thinking back to when he thought he heard Ryuko almost say his name.

Uzu shook his head. No, he was sure that she almost said his name. She was still in there. She still had a chance to remember him. Now he just had to figure out a way to get her to remember.

---

Uzu leaned back in his chair, his feet already up on the table. He ignored the disgusted look he was receiving from Jakuzure who sat beside him, mumbling something under her breath about his "lack of etiquette". He could care less what she thought.

He turned his attention to the row of students in front of him, the only thing separating the Elite Four from the rest of the club presidents was a spiked barricade. Mankanshoku, Ryuko, and their fight club were certainly making their way up the ranks, taking out at least four clubs a day. It should piss him off that Ryuko was able to easily beat his personally trained clubs, but he had to give the girl credit where credit was due.

He smirked under his breath. *Of all the clubs she could have started, of course it would be a fight club.*

"What right do you have to be here, underclassman?" Jakuzure asked, crossing her arms over her chest. She sounded like a spoiled brat, but it was funny, really.

Mankanshoku pushed her glasses up the bridge of her nose. "Our club activities give me the right. Personal ability is everything, remember?" She shot back. Uzu bit the inside of his cheek.

*She's got you there, Jakuzure.* Uzu smirked mentally.

---

"Are you going to let these people have their way, Lady Satsuki?" Jakuzure inquired once the Elite Four had settled back down in the meeting room.

Gamagoori cleared his throat. "Unless something is done, Mankanshoku and Matoi will become part of the student council' sinner circle."

Satsuki turned in her chair to face the rest of the student council members. "Anyone who is defeated doesn't have the right stuff." She said, simply, after sipping her tea.

Uzu turned his head toward Satsuki. "Let me fight her again." Uzu said, slinging his arm over the back of the couch. "I'll put her down for certain this time," he requested.

Satsuki glanced up at Uzu before she turned to her tea, sipping on it quietly. "Be patient," she replied, setting her tea back down. Uzu smirked to himself. *Ah, she didn't say no.* Uzu noted as Inumuta turned to Satsuki, his collar popping open.

"You must have some plan in mind, authorizing the fight club as you did." The dog said.

Satsuki sipped her tea once again. "Wait and watch a little longer," she said as she poured something into her tea. "Will they destroy this academy or be assimilated into it? We'll have to wait and see,"

---

Uzu walked down the street as he headed home. Usually he would take the railcar, but some part of him really wanted to just walk home. He needed to blow off some steam after he received notice that a few more of his athletic clubs - and some of Jakuzure's non-athletic clubs - were taken down by Ryuko and her fight club.

He scoffed and kicked a pebble. Ryuko and Mankanshoku were doing pretty well, their fight club was really improving for such a short amount of time. Mankanshoku did all the planning, Ryuko did all the fighting. They made a pretty good tag team. Uzu stopped in his tracks, his hands balling into fists inside his pockets.

*Tag team...*

He looked up to find that he was already at his doorstep. He bit his lip, rocking on the balls of his feet as he silently debated about whether or not he was going to go inside. With a soft huff, he continued on down the street, walking further and further from his house, the street lights and the moon his only sources of light.

He missed her. He really did. Uzu bit his lip, memories of he and Ryuko fighting side by side, taking down other gangs together.

"S-Sanageyama!"

Uzu stopped and turned to see Ryuko standing just a few feet from him, her eyes wide in surprise. "Ry..." He caught himself. "Matoi..."

Poised for battle, Ryuko began reaching for her scissor blade in her pocket, her brows furrowing. Uzu raised his hands in a placating manner. "H-Hey! Matoi, j-just wait a second! I'm not here for a fight!" He defended himself. How far had he walked from his place? Uzu looked around, finally noticing he was in the two-star district.

"Really?" Ryuko asked suspiciously.

Uzu turned back to Ryuko and nodded. "Yeah, I'm... Not really in the mood for a match anyway." He grumbled.

Ryuko raised her brow. "Really? That doesn't seem like you," she commented and Uzu chuckled.

He shrugged his hands into his pockets, grinning at Ryuko. "Well, you do know me best-" Uzu bit his tongue, stopping himself. He coughed into his hand. "A-Anyway! What... Um, what are you doing out, Matoi?" He asked, desperate to change the topic as he felt his cheeks warm up.

Ryuko eyed him suspiciously, her brows furrowed in confusion. "I...decided to go out for a walk," she replied, crossing her arms over her chest. She watched as Uzu sat down on a nearby bench, sinking into it as he did so. "And you?"

Uzu groaned, rolling his neck. "Same as you. I didn't quite feel like going home..." He mumbled, tilting his head in Ryuko's direction. He patted the empty space beside him on the bench, welcoming Ryuko to sit with him. She glared at him and Uzu raised his hands up defensively. "You don't have to if you don't want to," he said. She huffed and walked over to the bench, hesitating for a moment.

"Try anything funny and I'll kick your ass," Ryuko threatened.

Uzu smirked at her as she sat down on the far end of the bench. "Please, if anyone is going to be kicking ass, it'll be me." He mumbled. He draped his arms on the back of the bench as he tilted his head back to look up at the night sky, the stars finally coming out from behind the clouds. He turned his head to look at Ryuko. She was slumping against the bench, fiddling and wringing her hands together, something she often did when she was upset about something.

"You wanna talk about what's bothering you?" Uzu found himself asking.

Ryuko turned to him in surprise, her eyes widening just slightly. "H-How could you tell?" She asked, her brows furrowing.

The green haired male bit his lip. "I just could,"

"And why the hell do you care? Aren't we enemies?" She almost hissed.

*Enemies...* Uzu looked down, clicking his tongue against his teeth. "So? That doesn't mean that I'm still not a human being that's capable of emotion. Talk, Matoi." Uzu said, turning back to her as he leaned his arms on his knees.

Ryuko eyed him suspiciously as she leaned back, crossing her arms across her chest again. "It's this whole life of luxury thing," Ryuko confessed, surprising both herself and Uzu. Neither had expected she would talk, but Uzu wasn't going to pass up the opportunity. He

hadn't had any alone time with Ryuko like this, not since that Anti-Uniform Guerrilla had attacked her.

Though she was unconscious the entire time.

Uzu shook his head, listening as Ryuko continued speaking. "The whole reason that Mako and I did this whole club fight thing was to get on an equal playing field with your precious Satsuki, to beat all those damn clubs. Then Mako got our living conditions improved, everyone started to get really happy... Next thing I know, I promised to protect the gleams in their eyes, according to Mako. I was okay with it too, because it meant that everyone was happy. But... Now that we're here..." Ryuko trailed off, her eyes dropping.

"The life of luxury ain't up to what you thought it to be, huh?" Uzu asked after a moment.

Ryuko chuckled and shook her head. "Guess not. I miss it, just sitting and eating with them, things that normal families do. Now that they go off and do whatever they so please... I'm eating by myself again." She said. Uzu bit his lip. Ryuko must really not remember him, they ate dinner together every day back in middle school.

"What about you?" Ryuko asked, snapping Uzu out of his trance.

"Huh?"

"You," she reiterated. "What about you? Aren't you also upset about something?" She questioned. Uzu bit his lip, and he leaned back against the bench.

"Guess I am," he confessed.

"Want to talk about it?"

Uzu turned back to her, biting the inside of his cheek. "Same as you, I suppose. I've been feeling pretty...lonely." Uzu said, running his hand through his hair.

Ryuko cocked her head to the side. "What do you mean?"

Uzu turned to her and gave her a lopsided grin. "Uh... Recently I've been thinking about a close friend of mine, how I never see them anymore. We used to spend every day together back in middle school," Uzu said, his grin growing fond. "We'd spar, hang out, eat together..." He trailed off and he looked down at his feet.

"We'd fight a lot too..." He looked back up at her, his smile more nostalgic. "But we were still best friends." He confessed, a fond grin on his face as he looked at her.

A short silence passed between them before Ryuko finally decided to speak up. "W-Well, I... I hope you meet up with him again... Y-Your friend..." Ryuko stammered, her cheeks red.

Uzu looked up at her, his brows raising in surprise. Slowly, a small smile appeared on his lips. "Thanks, but my friend is a girl," Uzu corrected.

"Tch, well fine. I hope you meet up with your *girlfriend* again." Ryuko corrected, rolling her eyes.

Uzu chuckled, deciding whether or not he should correct Ryuko about his best friend not being his girlfriend. With another chuckle, he decided against it. "Thanks..." He said, gazing at Ryuko. "Me too."

---

Uzu crossed his arms over his chest. "What did you just say?" He asked, he and the other Elite Four members gathered in the meeting room as they looked at Satsuki. They convened a while after the Fight Club had disbanded, Ryuko had taken a hard beating for the sake of her friendship with Mankanshoku.

*That's just like her...* He thought softly.

Satsuki looked down at them from her chair, her tea cup in hand. "The fact that the lowly Fight Club defeated the other clubs meant that they were not worthy." She stated.

"So you're serious then?" Jakuzure piped up from her couch.

"Quit your impertinent questioning, Jakuzure!" Gamagoori barked at the pink haired band major. "Lady Satsuki has never done anything that she didn't mean!"

Satsuki crossed her arms over her chest and crossed one leg over the other. "He is correct. I will rebuild Hounnoji Academy's order from the ground up once more." She looked down at each member of the Elite Four. "Hounnoji Academy will hold a Reprisal General Election!"

Simultaneously, the Elite Four turned to Satsuki in surprise. Inumuta turned to her, his collar popping open. "Wait, surely you didn't exploit Matoi to purge this academy of its undesirables?" He inquired.

*Lady Satsuki was just using Ryuko?* Uzu grit his teeth. The thought made him sick to his stomach, but... He was sure that Lasy Satsuki had her reasons, more than just using Ryuko to purge Hounnoji of its *undesirables*. Satsuki smirked, and Uzu was left wondering just what was going on through their queen's head.

---

Uzu smirked as the pillar for the natural's election practically ascended from underneath him, already putting him to the top. All he had to do was knock off any fodder who dared to enter his territory.

Finally, the pillars stopped. He and the other members of the Elite four their own pillars, each one a different height. Uzu immediately noticed that his was much taller than anyone else's. Finally, Ryuko landed her own pillar and stared up at the rest of the Elite Four.

"Well, well. I see you aren't called the Elite Four for nothing," Satsuki commented.

Jakuzure smirked confidently. "Did you expect anything else?" She replied, shrugging her shoulders nonchalantly.

"Lady Satsuki!" Gamagoori spoke up, gathering the attention of the other finalists and Satsuki. "We, the Elite Four, hereby propose a new rule for the Sudden Death Runoff Election."

"We each wish to be allowed to face Ryuko Matoi in single combat." Uzu spoke up.

Jakuzure tucked her arms behind her back, a sly smile dancing on her lips. "If we're going to fight her anyway, this grand stage is the place for it."

Inumuta crossed his arms. "I believe it to be a fitting way to cap off the climax of the Naturals Election." He shared.

Satsuki chuckled, an amused smirk crossing her lips. "This should prove just as amusing, huh?" Suddenly, the ground began to shake and another arena arose from the ground and appeared in the center of the five other pillars. "This is the king of the hill final battle!" Satsuki announced.

"Matoi! Battle the Elite Four and emerge victorious!" Satsuki said, looking down at the girl with the red streak in her hair. "Do so and I shall tell you the details of your father's death!"

Gamagoori jumped down from his pillar, landing in the newly formed arena. "I am Lady Satsuki's impenetrable shield! And this is where I'm going to crush you!" Gamagoori boomed as he turned to Ryuko. The girl in question smirked as she joined Gamagoori down in the arena, transforming as she went.

Jakuzure placed her hands on her hips. "What's this? You speak as though you're going first," she commented.

Uzu scoffed under his breath. "I'll be the first to fight Matoi." He said. He could already feel his hands twitching in his pocket in excitement at the thought of getting a rematch with Ryuko.

"Fine by me! I'll take you all on!" Ryuko yelled.

Uzu smirked. *Getting a little excited, aren't we, Ryuko?* He thought as Inumuta spoke up. "You really are a fool," the dog said. "We said one on one didn't we? Each of us wants to defeat your Kamui with his own power."

"Who will fight has already been decided," Satsuki spoke up. "Haven't you noticed the different sizes of the pillars? The more students you defeated, the higher your tower."

"Gamagoori defeated the fewest, so he will go first. Then Inumuta, followed by Jakuzure, and then Sanageyama." Satsuki announced.

Uzu clicked his tongue against his teeth. "Damn, I beat too many of the cannon fodder?"

Inumuta adjusted his glasses. "That efficient fighting style of yours proved effective, I suppose." Inumuta commented.

*Was that sarcasm?* Uzu turned to Inumuta and frowned. If he could glare, he would.

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"You're petty! Petty! Petty!" Gamagoori yelled as he hit Ryuko over and over with his whips. "If you challenge her out of a personal vendetta, a great being like Satsuki Kiryuin won't budge!" He attacked again, this time sending Ryuko over the edge of the arena.

*Get it together, Ryuko.* Uzu thought. As if on cue, Ryuko dug her scissor blade into the side of her arena, the straps of her Kamui hooked over the blade and baring her breasts to the world. Uzu's brow twitched irritably as he heard the roar of male cheers fill the arena. He clenched his fist inside his pocket, suppressing the need to bash in every single boy's face in the student body who looked at Ryuko as a piece of meat.

*Get it together, Uzu...* He thought as Ryuko finally pulled herself up onto the arena. She charged forward, recklessly swinging at Gamagoori.

*What is that girl up to...?* Uzu raised his brows in curiosity. He knew Ryuko, and he knew she wasn't that stupid to go charging in, guns ablaze. Finally, Gamagoori burst open and switched to the offensive as Ryuko switched to defensive, chopping his whips to chunks as he attacked.

"Let me show you the true terror of the Shackle Regalia!" Gamagoori yelled as he pulled out chakram like weapons. "Ryuko Matoi! Your independence is revoked!" He started to attack again but Ryuko met each of his strikes with one of her own. Gamagoori managed to hit her hand, causing Ryuko's scissor blade to go flying. She cursed under her breath as Gamagoori constricted her movements, the gauntlets on his hands transforming into molds. He trapped Ryuko in the molds, squeezing and crushing her in his grasp.

Suddenly, Ryuko freed herself from his hold, spinning out from the mold and transforming back into her school uniform. Gamagoori moved, hitting her with his big whip of love. Ryuko grit her teeth as she took the attack, grasping onto the whip, before she was pulled to Gamagoori. The outer cloth wrapped around them, trapping Ryuko inside as Gamagoori began to crush her against him.

"Uh oh, is it all over?" Jakuzure said.

"A shame. I wanted to gather more data," Inumuta voiced.

Uzu crossed his arms across his chest. *Ryuko wouldn't lose so easily...* He thought to himself. He raised his brows curiously as he sensed something different coming from Ryuko. "No! What's this I'm sensing?" He asked, turning his attention to Ryuko.

Satsuki furrowed her brows. "Gamagoori, that was foolish." She reprimanded quietly.



"Life fiber synchronize...!" Ryuko yelled. Suddenly, red blades began to tear out from Gamagoori's outer cloth, breaking his outer armor. Ryuko finally emerged, red blades decorating her Kamui. "Senketsu Senjin!"

She charged at Gamagoori at full speed, red blades protruding from the knuckle area and resembling claws. She separated him from his Shackle Regalia, scraps of cloth flying everywhere. "Finishing move! Sen-I-soshitsu!"

Uzu grunted in disbelief as a horn blared, declaring Ryuko the victor of round one. It wasn't that he had no faith in Ryuko or Gamagoori, it was Ryuko's skill that had surprised him. Uzu smirked to himself.

*A new transformation, Matoi? You've certainly grown...*

TBC.

## Chapter 5

Chapter 5:

"That's one down, Kiryuin!" Ryuko yelled as she slung her scissor blade over her shoulder.

Uzu turned his attention to the blue haired Student Council Information and Strategy Committee Chair as he descended down his stairs, heading for the center platform to join Ryuko. "I suppose that means that I will be your next opponent, Matoi," he said, descending down the steps.

"You're free to rest, Matoi!" Satsuki said from the top of her tower.

Ryuko scoffed. "Get real! I gotta waste your chumps and then come after you!" Ryuko yelled. She turned to Inumuta who had finally joined her on the platform. "Let's get to it." She said.

*Typical Ryuko, for you.* Uzu almost sighed. Sometimes he could honestly predict what Ryuko was going to say before she even said it.

Inumuta chuckled. "So impatient..." Inumuta said, looking up at Ryuko. "Still, I hate to waste time too." He said, his collar popping open.

---

Uzu crossed his arms over his chest as Inumuta continued to assault Ryuko, his optical camouflage already in use and giving him the advantage. *I wonder how she'll make a comeback...* Uzu thought to himself as Ryuko skidded to the edge of the stadium, doing all that she could to defend herself from Inumuta's unseeable attacks.

"There's nowhere to run!" Inumuta taunted as he continued his barrage. "If I can only gather obvious data like this, I'll be very disappointed!"

Uzu sensed a change in Ryuko, she had take on a more cocky aura, one she usually had when she knew she had the upper hand. Uzu smirked to himself, eager to see what new plan Ryuko came up with to counter Inumuta. Her Kamui altered in appearance as it suddenly grew an oversized patch that very much resembled an eye. *Getting a little reckless aren't we, Ryuko?* Uzu smirked mentally.

Ryuko groaned as she tried to hold the enlarged eye upright, her Kamui growing increasingly more revealing as the eye grew in size. "If I can't see where you are... I'll just have to attack everywhere at the same time!" Ryuko yelled as the eye stretched over the entire stadium. She slammed the eye over the entire stadium, a puff of smoke emitting from under it after the recoil.

Uzu smirked as he noticed a small bump under the eye. *Atta girl,* He complimented. The eye retracted and returned to its original size, Ryuko's Kamui returning to its original appearance.

Once the eye was gone, it revealed Inumuta, whose head was buried in the ground from the previous attack and his optic camouflage no longer in use.

"Oh, dear. It looks like the shock of that attack has wrecked that hide-and-seek ability of his," Jakuzure piped up, a smirk on her lips.

"That's what happens when you rely on your eyes." Uzu said, a smirk on his lips.

Jakuzure shot him a look. "Yeah, just like a certain somebody!" She snarked at him and Uzu bit his lip.

She got him there.

Uzu turned back to the match to see Ryuko point the tip of her blade at Inumuta, who had finally freed himself from the ground. "See that? Make a crazy attack even crazier and it'll hit," Ryuko shot at the blue haired male. She stepped back, her scissor blade changing in appearance. "Finishing move!" She yelled and swung at Inumuta.

The blue haired male stepped back, raising his arms defensively as he transformed back into his regular Goku uniform. Ryuko stopped her attack, glaring at Inumuta suspiciously.

He smirked at her. "Houka Inumuta hereby forfeits this battle!"

Uzu raised his brows, incredulously. Ryuko transformed back into her school uniform, eyeing the male suspiciously. "What are you up to?" She asked.

"If I continue fighting, the data I've gathered so far would be damaged. I'm here for the data, not victory." He replied before walking away.

Jakuzure frowned and placed her hands on her hips with a huff. "That damn data-lover is grandstanding again..." She grumbled irritably.

"Still, Lady Satsuki is allowing it..." Uzu mumbled as he and the others turned to Lady Satsuki.

"Jakuzure," Satsuki spoke up. "Prepare for battle,"

---

*You've grown considerably, Ryuko...* Uzu thought, his brows raised in surprise as he watched Ryuko emerge from the debris, *flying*. Explosions sounded up in the sky as Nonon, according to Ryuko, was taking potshots and firing missiles at random.

"Now, now, why are you losing your cool, little lady Jakuzure?" Uzu asked as he sat down on the ground, his arms crossed over his chest.

Ryuko changed her direction, heading straight for Satsuki, only to be knocked out of the way by Jakuzure. The pinkette knocked Ryuko down to the ground and followed her, transforming her flying machine back into a land one. "Take this! Symphonia Regalia Musical Barrage!" The pinkette yelled, firing another round of missiles at Ryuko. The girl with the red streak in

her hair took to the skies, swiftly dodging any missiles that came her way and out flying missiles that collided together, causing explosions.

Suddenly, Ryuko emerged from the smoke, a large flute shaped missile in her arms. She sent the missile towards Jakuzure, causing the pinkette's uniform to burst into drums, trumpets, and other instruments. Jakuzure emerged from the debris only for Ryuko to fly towards her, scissor blade ready for the finishing move. "Finishing move: Sen-I-Soshitsu!" She yelled, knocking Jakuzure from the platform.

The girl with the red streak in her hair landed safely on the platform, looking quite confused, her confusion growing when the crowd began to cheer.

"Encore! Encore! Encore!" They repeated, clapping as they went.

A spotlight appeared, and Jakuzure appeared, donning her Symphony Regalia: Da Capo. Jakuzure smirked, pointing her baton at Ryuko. "For the encore, let's go with one of the standards," she said, smirk dancing on her lips.

Ryuko almost groaned irritably. "There's more?" She grumbled.

A cannon-like mechanism emerged from Jakuzure's hat, a pink-purple beam emitting from it and hitting Ryuko, causing the latter to hit the floor. "You've been reduced to a wooden doll that can only sit there and bear the brunt of my baton's attacks." Jakuzure taunted, her brows furrowing.

Uzu clicked his tongue against his teeth. "What are you doing, Matoi?! You're supposed to fight me and fall before my bamboo sword!" He yelled, his brows furrowing.

Jakuzure snapped her attention to Uzu. "Hey! Whose side are you on?!" She snapped. She calmed herself, turning back to Ryuko, her eyes almost dark. "Pipe down, wild monkey. It's bad manners to talk during a performance." Ryuko frowned before she closed her eyes, crossing her arms over her chest.

"And now, it's time for the encore to come to an end!" Jakuzure announced, firing another beam of pink-purple wave at Ryuko. "It's time for your finale! Your 'fate' ends here!"

The wave hit Ryuko directly, but it deflected off of her, not injuring her one bit. Jakuzure looked on in disbelief before she increased the strength of her attack, her brows furrowing in anger. Ryuko opened her eyes and slightly changed the position of her hands. "Time to send it back! Senketsu Mubyoshi!" She yelled, countering Jakuzure's wave with her own, pure one. After a short stalemate, Ryuko won over, nearly knocking Jakuzure over with her wave.

"Let's do this! Scissor Blade: Decapitation Mode!" Ryuko yelled as her scissor blade altered its appearance. The girl with the dark hair charged forward, her hands tightening on the blade. "It's curtains for you! Finishing move: Sen-I-Soshitsu!" Ryuko yelled, separating Jakuzure from her Symphony Regalia.

Uzu smirked to himself as he rose to his feet, trying to hide how excited he actually was for his rematch with Ryuko. *It's finally my turn, Ryuko. Better prepare yourself.*

---

"Come at me, Sanageyama. Time to finish our fight from the other day," she said, her smirk dancing on her lips. "I ain't gonna run this time."

Uzu smirked as he stood before her, his hands shoved in his pockets. "You wouldn't be Ryuko Matoi if you did." He smirked at her. "The woman who took my eyes and gave me the world. I'm going to take you down this time!"

Uzu turned his attention to Lady Satsuki. "I'm going to take the liberty of putting her down, Lady Satsuki!"

Satsuki nodded. "Very well. Round four, begin." She said.

Ryuko and Uzu turned to each other. "Senketsu Senjin, and then Senketsu Shippu, eh? You're evolution is astonishing, Matoi," Uzu complimented her, his smirk growing. "But it's no match for my growth! Let's go!" He yelled, quickly transforming into his Blade Regalia MKII. Ryuko copied him, tearing the red pin from her glove as she transformed into her Kamui Senketsu.

Swiftly, the pair charged at each other.

"Hraaaaah!"

"Haaaah!"

Just before they reached each other, the pair stopped short as a girl with blonde pigtails and a pink dress appeared between them. Ryuko and Uzu jumped back, quite surprised by the mystery girl's sudden appearance. *Wh-Who the hell...?*

"Sanageyama! Get back!" Satsuki yelled from her tower.

Uzu turned to look at Satsuki. *She's lost her cool.* He noted. He turned back to Ryuko and the new girl just in time to see Ryuko transform back into her school uniform.

"Who the hell is that?" She asked.

"Why have you come, Nui Harime?" Satsuki asked from the top of her tower.

The girl giggled, smiling up at Satsuki. Uzu suppressed a shiver. Something about this girl was rubbing him the wrong way. "That isn't fair, Lady Satsuki, doing something this fun without telling me!" She giggled.

Satsuki merely furrowed her brows. "I'm not obligated to tell you anything." She replied shortly.

"Gosh! How cold! I thought you and I were two hearts beating as one!" She smiled again, her smile sickeningly sweet. "Both day and night!"

"Don't be insincere. You associate with no one." Satsuki said. Uzu grit his teeth. He really did not like seeing this new girl here. He didn't like that she appeared out of nowhere and that she seemed to be incredibly close to Satsuki. Something about this girl was rubbing him the wrong way, not in a good way either. Seeing this Nui Harime girl made him nervous somehow... It put him on edge.

*Is she here for Ryuko?*

That was always one possibility. Ryuko seemed to have a knack for attracting odd characters, namely her blue haired homeroom teacher and that Anti-Guerrilla Uniform man. Uzu looked back at Satsuki. He knows that Satsuki had warned him to stay away from this Nui girl, but... He turned back to Ryuko, his brows knitting together.

*She interrupted my match with Ryuko.*

That wasn't enough reason to interact with Nui, he knew nothing about this girl. But she was still after Ryuko...

"Stand aside, woman." Uzu found himself saying as he pointed his shinai at the little blonde girl. He had acted purely on impulse. "I won't allow anymore interference in my fight with Matoi..." He growled. It seemed like a logical reason to ignore Satsuki's warnings, but Uzu still couldn't shake the feeling that something bad was going to happen.

"I'm sorry, I can't do that! After all, I'm the one who's going to fight her!" Nui said.

Uzu furrowed his brows angrily. *This damn girl is after Ryuko.* Uzu growled as he swung his shinai at Nui. "I told you to get out of the way!" He yelled. The girl closed her parasol and used it to block Uzu's attack. Uzu grunted in disbelief.

*Just who the hell is this girl?*

Ryuko stared in disbelief as she took a step back. "Wh-Who the hell is this girl?" She asked, voicing Uzu's exact thoughts.

Nui sighed, her sickening smile still on her lips. "Gosh, this won't do. You're no fun at all." She turned to Uzu.

The green haired male growled as he switched his shinai. "Eat this! Finishing move: Isshin Zenzanken!" Before he could attack, Nui intercepted him and stuck her little pinky finger into an opening in his Blade Regalia. Suddenly she pulled out her little finger, a red thread attached to it.

"Go on back to being a naked ape!" She said, ripping the thread from Uzu's armor. Uzu froze, feeling the same exact sensation as when his armor overheated back in his second match with Ryuko. *Wh-What-* He stopped as his uniform was ripped from him, leaving him in the nude.

"I-Impossible!" He yelled. He turned around only to have Nui hit her parasol into his gut, knocking him over the edge of the platform. Uzu yelled as he fell, his brain still trying to wrap around what just happened. *Th-That bitch!* He righted himself up, and dug his shinai

into the nearby wall, using it as a way to stop him from falling. He jerked to a sudden stop, quite grateful that his shinai didn't break under the pressure. Uzu turned his gaze back to the platform.

"Damn it... Who the hell is that woman?" He looked around, clicking his tongue against his teeth. Now he had to find a way down...

Uzu snapped his head back in the direction of the platform when a horn sounded, announcing the start of the next battle. *Tch, damn that girl, always getting into fights.*

For once, he really wished that Ryuko wasn't much of a fighter.

---

Uzu rushed to the top of the stairs, his brows furrowing as he heard the conversation from the platform.

"That's...!"

"Yup! It's the other half to your scissor blade! I pulled this out of your dad!"

"Wait..." Uzu bit his lip, he could practically feel Ryuko's malicious aura from where he was. "It was you?" Ryuko asked.

"Yup! It was me! I'm the one who killed your father!"

Uzu froze in his tracks, his heart pounding in his chest and ears. *Ryuko...* He turned to the platform, his brows knitting together in concern. "Ryuko... Please, for once, don't do anything rash..." Uzu murmured to himself before he continued up the stairs.

"YOU BITCH!" Ryuko screamed.

---

Uzu let out an exhausted breath as he finally reached where the remaining members of the Elite Four, Mankanshoku had taken off a while ago to go help Ryuko. Uzu grit his teeth.

*Ryuko...*

Ryuko's transformation had really don't a number on her, turning her into a mon- Uzu shook his head. She wasn't a monster, she is Ryuko, but that didn't change the fact that she was almost this entirely separate being that was set on vengeance.

He couldn't sense his Ryuko anywhere in that thing.

"Things have taken a disturbing turn, I see..." Uzu muttered as he joined the other members of the Elite Four.

"Sanageyama!" Gamagoori said in surprise.

Jakuzure smirked at him. "Oh, you're not dead, wild monkey?" She snarked.

Inumuta smirked at him as well, pulling the zipper of his collar open. "Thanks to you, I got plenty of data on Banshi," Inumuta shared.

If Uzu could roll his eyes, he would. Those two were just too alike. Uzu registered the sound of Ryuko and Nui's fight in the background. He grit his teeth, tightening his hold on his shinai. "Until I've settled my score with Matoi... I won't die." Uzu said.

"Sanageyama, you're... Put some clothes on," Gamagoori advised.

---

The Elite Four members followed behind Satsuki as they walked through the ruined arena of the school thanks to Ryuko. Now donned in his track suit, Uzu and the other members of the Elite Four awaited Satsuki's orders. She transformed into her Kamui Junketsu, heading for the direction of where Ryuko and Nui were fighting.

"I want you four to evacuate the students. I'll stop Matoi," Satsuki said before she took off for Ryuko.

"Right!" The Elites replied, taking off in separate directions.

Uzu continued on, gathering students up and escorting them towards the exits. He noticed Mankanshoku pass by on her way to save Ryuko and Uzu froze in his tracks, the other students escaping to safety. Uzu bit his lip. *Ryuko...* Uzu wanted nothing more than to go help his friend, but right now, he had other things to worry about.

The green haired male shook his head before he continued on with the task at hand. *Help her, Mankanshoku... I think you're the only one who can save her right now...*

TBC.



## Chapter 6

### Chapter 6:

Uzu draped his arm over the back of the couch, his brows furrowing. *I wonder how Ryuko is doing...* It's been a few days since Ryuko's match with that Nui girl, since she had lost control during her battle. She hasn't been to school ever since so Uzu hasn't been able to check if she was okay. He hasn't been able to check on her also because he's been swamped with helping Satsuki and the rest of the Elite Four with the Tri-City Schools Raid Trip.

The green haired male turned his head to Satsuki as she asked he and the other Elite Four members to give their report. "Athletic Committee squads 1 through 11, preparations complete. Assigning to Osaka Raid Trip Brigade." Uzu reported.

Jakuzure turned her attention to Satsuki. "Non-Athletic Committee squads 1 through 18, preparations complete. Assigning to Kyoto Raid Trip Brigade." Jakuzure said.

"The Disciplinary Committee is more than sufficient for the Kobe Raid Trip Brigade." Gamagoori said, turning his attention to Satsuki.

Uzu smirked. "Being an elite corps is all well and good, but don't fail," Uzu piped up, his smirk dancing on his lips. The smirk fell from his lips as his thoughts went back to Ryuko and her wellbeing.

Jakuzure let out a soft huff, as she turned to Gamagoori and placed her hands on the couch she was sitting on. "Yeah, nobody wants to see you committing seppuku, Ira." She turned her head to the side. "The cleanup of your guts would be a pain." She grumbled.

Gamagoori shook his head. "You needn't worry. We'll succeed."

"I have formed an Information Strategy Team with the PC club at its core, using two-star students from the Information Systems class." Inumuta said, zipping open his collar so he could speak. "The information network in each city is already under our control. We're monitoring all communications in the high schools of each city." he said.

Satsuki sipped her tea slowly before she looked over her shoulder to look at the screen behind her. "Iori, are the special uniforms ready?" She asked as Iori was projected onto the screen.

He nodded. "Yes, milady. Development of Anti-Osaka, Anti-Kyoto, and Anti-Kobe Combat-spec Goku uniforms are complete. They are being distributed to the Raid Trip Brigade as we speak. As for you Elite Four, new Three-star Goku uniforms are currently being made for all of you. However, owing to the fact that final adjustments will take some time, you will have to set out with the same special Goku uniforms as the other students." Iori explained as the Elite Four looked at the combat-spec uniforms that they were already wearing.

On the screen behind Satsuki, an image of Nui Harime and Ryuko in her crazed form appeared on the screen. "They have been improved based on your battles with Ryuko Matoi

and Nui Harime." Satsuki explained.

Uzu bit the inside of his cheek, his brows knitting together. Just mentioning that blonde girl's name made Uzu's blood boil. He clenched his fist. He couldn't wait to get to get the chance to fight Harime again, so he could get payback for what she did to Ryuko.

"Look forward to them," Satsuki said, snapping Uzu out of his trance. "There is no shame in your defeat at the hands of the Pure Life Fiber Kamui Senketsu and the High Order Tailor Nui Harime."

The Elite Four turned to their queen as she continued on. "You will mature further. It is merely a rite of passage. And now I look forward to your maturation as commanders. Lead the Raid Trip Brigades to victory!" Satsuki said.

"Understood!" The Elite Four and Iori said as they saluted Satsuki.

Satsuki stood to her feet, her hands resting on her Bakuzan. "Very well, the Raid Trip is set to leave at 0200 hours the day after tomorrow. You're dismissed." She said. Iori nodded, his image on the screen disappearing when the screen shut down. The Elite Four nodded as well and all turned to leave.

"Except for you, Sanageyama." Satsuki said, just before the Elite Four could get far.

Uzu raised his brows in surprise, ignoring the way that Jakuzure laughed under her breath. "Oho, looks like the monkey is in trouble," she muttered as she and the others took their leave. The door closed behind them and Uzu turned back to Satsuki. Had he done something to offend her?

His brows knitted together in worry. Had she figured out about him and Ryuko?

"Is there something wrong, Sanageyama?" Satsuki asked as she sat back down in her chair.

Uzu bit the inside of his cheeks. "I...don't understand, Lady Satsuki," Uzu said. He really wasn't sure why Satsuki wished to speak with him.

"You seem distracted as of late," Satsuki said as she sipped her tea. "Is there something on your mind?" She inquired, glancing at him from over her tea cup. Uzu bit the inside of his cheek, his brows knitting together. He couldn't possibly tell Satsuki that he was worried about Ryuko, about her enemy. So instead, he remained silent.

Satsuki set her now empty tea cup down and folded her hands over her lap. "Why don't you take the rest of the day off, Sanageyama? Preparations are nearly complete and if you go on the raid trip as distracted as you are now, you'll be a liability more than an asset. Take some time off to collect your thoughts, then come back fully prepared for the raid." Satsuki suggested.

Uzu nodded and bowed to her. "Alright... Thank you, Lady Satsuki. I won't let you down."

---

Uzu shoved his hands into his pockets as he exited the building, dragging his feet along as he continued on. *Day off, huh?* He thought to himself as he passed through all the other students who were busy preparing for the Tri-City Raid. Lady Satsuki wasn't one to give a *day off*, so Uzu figured he must have been pretty distracted to get Satsuki's attention like that.

*I'll have to keep that under control then...* He thought to himself as he exhaled deeply.

"How's Ryuko-kun doing?"

Uzu stopped in his tracks and looked around, finally noticing that Mikisugi and Mankanshoku were a few feet away from where he stood. He inched closer, sticking close to the wall to avoid detection as he listened to their conversation.

"Ryuko-chan is suddenly allergic to wearing her uniform..." Mankanshoku said sadly as she poked at the dirt. "After she snapped out of her rampage, she went straight to the school, but after she came back, she was all mopey for some reason. She doesn't even try to put on poor Senketsu..."

"Oh I see..." Mikisugi mumbled, his face appearing worried.

Uzu bit his lip as he turned away from Mikisugi and Mankanshoku, crossing his arms over his chest as he did so. *Ryuko...* He thought to himself worriedly. At least he knew she was physically alright after that whole incident with Harime, but that was to be expected. Ryuko wasn't one to stay down after being beaten by someone. Uzu let a small smile appear on his lips. It was something that he admired about her.

The green haired swordsman tapped his foot against the dirt. After a bit of contemplation, he walked off, his hands shoved back into his pockets as he walked at a brisk pace.

---

Uzu looked up at the small house before him, it was actually pretty difficult for him to find this place since he hadn't been in the No-star district before. That, and he was also stopped by a couple of kids who attempted to mug him.

Attempted is the key word here.

Uzu sucked in a breath as he approached the door. He raised his hand up to the door but hesitated slightly, his knuckles just a few inches from the door. He exhaled and finally rapped his knuckles against the door. A brown haired woman, who looked very much like Mankanshoku, answered the door, looking at Uzu curiously.

"Ah, hello. How can I help you, young man?" She asked.

Uzu almost flushed, realizing that he had arrived here purely on impulse and without a plan in mind. "I-I... Uh... Y-You're Mako Mankanshoku's mother right? I-Is Ryu-" he bit his tongue. "M-Matoi. I-Is Matoi here?" He stammered.

Sukuyo Mankanshoku, Mako's mother, nodded as she stepped aside and opened the door wider for Uzu. "Yes, she is. Come on in, young man." She said. Uzu nodded gratefully and

stepped inside, taking his shoes off by the door. "Ryuko is in the other room. You're a friend of Ryuko's, I assume?" She asked.

Uzu gave a lopsided smile. "Yeah, you could say that." He said.

"Oh my, you must be so worried about Ryuko after what happened yesterday. I can check on her if you like?" Sukuyo offered.

Uzu nodded. "Ah, y-yes please." He said, wringing his hands together in front of him. Sukuyo nodded and entered the other room, leaving Uzu alone. He registered the faint sound of something cooking and a pleasant aroma filled his nose. Sukuyo returned a moment later, closing the door to Ryuko's room.

"She's asleep right now. Why don't you wait until she wakes up? In the meanwhile, I'm making my famous mystery croquettes! Why don't you try some, young man?" She offered, heading back to the kitchen.

Uzu shook his head. "A-Actually I was only coming to visit Ryuko, but thank you, though." He turned his attention to the room where Ryuko was. "Um... W-Would you mind if I went to see her?" He asked.

Sukuyo smiled at him, nodding. "No not at all, go right ahead!" She said before she turned back to her cooking. Uzu nodded gratefully and turned to enter the room where Ryuko was. He slid the door open and found Ryuko sound asleep on the floor, her uniform hanging on the wall nearby. He walked in, closing the door behind him. Quietly, he sat on the floor by where Ryuko was resting, careful not to stir the girl in her sleep.

Uzu sat cross-legged on the floor as he looked down at Ryuko. He allowed a soft smile to cross his features. "Geez, what am I gonna do with you?" He grumbled to himself. He propped his shoulder on his knee, cupping his chin in the palm of his hand. With his free hand, he reached over and poked Ryuko's cheek. He smirked, remembering that it always bugged her when he did that back in middle school.

He sighed and pulled his hand back. "Damn, you're always getting into fights..." He muttered to her, knowing full well that the girl couldn't hear him. "You're pretty reckless, you know? It worries me sometimes..." He grumbled and sighed once again.

"I have no reason to, though. I know what you're capable of. You're strong..." He said, his features softening. "You always have been."

He clicked his tongue and frowned. "Jeez, why the hell am I talking to you like you're dead?" He grumbled under his breath, poking Ryuko's cheek again. She stirred slightly and Uzu quickly pulled his finger away, his brows raising in alarm. She stilled and Uzu calmed, releasing a breath.

"I gotta be honest here... I miss you, Ryuko," Uzu found himself murmuring. Uzu flushed, realizing what he had just said. He rose to his feet, deciding that it would be best for him to leave before he said anything else incredibly stupid. He stepped out the door, closing it behind him, not noticing that Ryuko had turned to him just as he left.

---

"Ah, thank you, again." Uzu said again as he left the house, waving goodbye to Sukuyo Mankanshoku. He continued up the path to head back home and shoved his hands into his pockets. As he headed up the street, he noticed another student coming in his direction, one he hadn't recognized before. The student wore glasses and had blue-gray hair that brushed over his left eye.

The student glanced over at Uzu as he passed and Uzu stopped in his tracks, watching the student go. Uzu bit his lip, not liking the sinking feeling he was getting in the pit of his stomach.

"Ah, Sanageyama-senpai!" Uzu turned back around to find Mankanshoku coming in his direction, looking exhausted. "H...Have you seen a student with grayish hair head in this direction? He had glasses too!" Mankanshoku asked as she acted out what the student looked like.

Uzu turned and pointed back over his shoulder and towards Mankanshoku's house. "He headed that way," he said. Mankanshoku nodded gratefully and sprinted off, calling out the student's name. Uzu bit his lip again, he hadn't recognized that name either, at least from what he could remember. He didn't like seeing that student, it put him on edge, as if something bad was going to happen.

---

Uzu stood before Kaneo Takarada's army in Osaka, his hands shoved into his pockets and his athletic committee squads behind him.

"I'm surprised you came, slime of Hounnoji Academy!" The man on the screen, Kaneo Takarada, said. "You may have thought you were hot stuff in Kobe and Kyoto, but you're not so tough here in Osaka!" He yelled.

The green haired male smirked. "Well, well you've heard the rumors of the other cities? I thought we had cut off your information network." Uzu said.

Takarada chuckled. "I hate to break it to you, but I have powerful allies in the form of Osakan grannies. They'll spread rumors in the blink of an eye. Even if you lock down the net, you can't stop a rumor. Listen up, I'm gonna tell you the rules of this town!" He yelled and brought out wads of cash from his pockets. "Osaka here is a merchant town. It's money that makes this town go 'round! He who has the most coins wins!" He said as he fanned himself with the eccentric amount of cash in his hand.

Uzu scoffed as he reached for his shinai. "Money? Philistine." He scoffed and pulled out his shinai, aiming it at Takarada's army. "We have come to bring down those like you who reek of the old system in order to create the new world order that Satsuki Kiryuin strives to achieve!" Uzu yelled, his brows knitted together. He couldn't wait to take this guy down, it pissed him off to be near him.

"You're adorable. You naive, naive thing," Takarada chuckled.

*I am not adorable...* Uzu thought with a grumble.

"A guy who doesn't know the fearsomeness of money shouldn't be offering up opinions about society!" Takarada laughed. "I'm gonna wake you up to the reality by smacking you in the face with wads of cash! Alright, people, let 'me have it!" Takarada ordered.

The sound of something being loaded registered in Uzu's ears before shots were fired in his direction. He grunted and quickly deflected the attacks with his shinai. Uzu gripped his shinai tighter, holding it defensively in front of him. "Guns?" He asked.

"It's bills, sir! They're shooting at us, using wads of bills as bullets!" One of the members of the army spoke up behind Uzu. Okay, now that just sounded stupid. What a waste of money. *Though, I suppose if you're a merchant town, you have more than enough cash that you could waste...*

Takarada's forces opened fire again and Uzu slung his shinai over his shoulder. "Armed Ping Pong Club, step forward!" He yelled, and the club members moved in front of him, using their oversized ping pong paddles as shields. "As well as the Sumo Club! Sumo Stomp attack!" He ordered and Sumo club did as ordered, the ground quaking beneath their feet and causing Takarada's men to lose their footing.

"Armed Archery Club and Armed Track Club! Ultra long range squads! Salvo attack!" Uzu yelled, pointing his shinai in the direction of Takarada's men. An onslaught of projectiles flew at Takarada's army, knocking them to the ground. "Now! Storm the school building!" The green haired male ordered. His men charged forward, running for the school's entrance.

"Over my dead body! Force 'em back!" Takarada ordered as a new wave of soldiers came through the school entrance, pushing back Uzu's men.

"You can withstand Goku uniforms?" Uzu asked in disbelief as his and Takarada's troopship got into a stalemate.

"The Kiryuins ain't the only conglomerate around here! Don't underestimate the might of the Takarada Conglomerate's money!" He yelled as he pushed Uzu's forces back, all the way back into the city.

Uzu clicked his tongue against his teeth. "Tch, damn..." He grumbled. This damn eccentric man was certainly giving him a run for his money.

---

Uzu swung his sword, knocking down one of the enemy students. "My bamboo sword is enough for the likes of you," he muttered and stuffed his free hand into his pocket before he knocked down another student with his shinai. The radio in his collar buzzed and he pulled it closer to his face using his free hand, a few more enemies ran at Uzu.

"It sounds like Gamagoori and Jakuzure have wrapped things up on their end." Inumuta asked over the radio. "How are you coming along?" He inquired as Uzu merely swat enemies away with his shinai.

"Most of the Kinman High students have been dealt with." Uzu reported, knocking back a couple more enemies with a single swing. "Tell Lady Satsuki that Osaka will be under our control soon."

"I wouldn't be so sure about that."

Uzu turned to see Takarada standing before him, looking grandiose as ever. "Buddy, you're underestimating my power. The students aren't my only pawns!" He declared as he threw his cash into the air. As if on cue, more than a handful of regular civilians appeared, grabbing at the wads of cash greedily before they whipped out their own guns and began shooting at Uzu and his men.

Uzu grit his teeth and swung his shinai, using it to deflect any bullets that came his way. "You're making the common masses fight for you, you bastard?" Uzu yelled.

"I am indeed," Takarada replied, sounding quite proud of himself. "But it's not quite accurate to call them common masses. They're all Combat Citizens who have been blinded by money. They're all itching to fight..." Takarada warned as more waves of "Combat Citizens" appeared behind Takarada.

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Takarada smirked as he pulled out more wads of his Takarada bucks from his coat. "Okay people, kill him! Make him suffer and I'll pay one million Takarada bucks!" He yelled, throwing the money into the air. Predictably, the masses jumped for the money, looking much like greedy, savage beasts.

Uzu grit his teeth. There were too many for him, even he knew his limits. And he wasn't about to attack regular people that were manipulated to do Takarada's bidding.

A strong wind began to blow and a bright light appeared. Uzu turned toward the light source to find Lady Satsuki descending from her helicopter, her Bakuzan in hand. "Lady Satsuki!" He raised his brow, noticing that she had on Ryuko's red glove on her left hand. He bit the inside of his cheek, his brows furrowing.

*That's right... Ryuko had lost Senketsu to that damn Harime girl...*

---

"Leave us, fools! Or my next strike will take your lives!" Satsuki yelled and swung her Bakuzan, creating a strong whirlwind, one that was strong enough to rattle the enemies senseless. Only seconds later, the masses left, running with their tails between their legs.

*I see you're as strong as ever, Lady Satsuki.* Uzu thought, slinging his shinai over his shoulder.

Takarada watched in disbelief as he forces scurried out as far away as they could manage from Satsuki. "Do you see now, Takarada?" Satsuki spoke up, causing Takarada to turn his attention to her. "It is not money that rules men, it is fear." She stated, merely glancing at the

man over her shoulder. Takarada collapsed to the floor and scooted back a few feet. He smirked and brought out a red button before he pressed it.

Suddenly, the ground beneath cracked as his coat swallowed him up. Two large, golden pincers appeared and tore through the material before it ripped off the material entirely, revealing Takarada in what appeared to be a ridiculous golden crab machine. "Say hello to my anti-Honnouji Academy mechanized weapon, Dotonbori Robo!" He yelled.

"Pathetic." Satsuki said.

"How incredibly tacky." Uzu added.

"Oh? You can tell even without your eyes?" Takarada asked.

Uzu scoffed. "Yes. I can sense it by aura alone - the smell of your overblown arrogance." He said. Uzu didn't evened his eyes to figure out that the damn machine probably looked ridiculous. Takarada attacked, swinging down one of his massive golden pincers at Satsuki and Uzu, both of them merely jumped out of the way. "Club members! Guard Lady Satsuki! Archery! Javelin! Discus! Shot put! Everyone else!" Uzu ordered once he had landed safely on the ground.

"Jocks ain't worth one red cent!" Takarada yelled as he knocked out Uzu's men with a single attack. "Here we go... Sen-nari Gourd Missile Shower!" He yelled, firing an onslaught of missiles at Uzu and Satsuki. "No one could've survived that..." He reasoned as the smoke began to clear. His eyes widened in surprise to find a shield by where Satsuki and Uzu were standing.

Gamagoori appeared from behind the shield as he rose to his full height, now dressed in his new white and gold Goku uniform. "As long as Ira Gamagoori draws breath, I will not allow so much as a scratch on Lady Satsuki!" He yelled.

Jakuzure appeared behind him, quite literally riding on the man's shoulder and also donned in her new white and gold uniform. "You should stop pressing your luck, Naniwa monkey," she taunted, her smirk dancing on her lips.

Inumuta, also dressed in his new uniform, appeared beside Gamagoori. "I'll be recording the data from these new Three-Star Goku Uniforms," he said, the three of them walking to join Satsuki and Uzu, both of whom were unharmed.

"Apologies for the delay, Lady Satsuki." Gamagoori said. "The Kobe and Kyoto School Raid Brigades have now arrived."

"Good work," Satsuki said as she turned to the Elite Four members. A helicopter sounded overhead and the team looked up to see Iori.

"Catch, Sanageyama!" He yelled and pulled a lever, causing a dresser to fall from the helicopter. "Here's your new Goku uniform!" He called.



Uzu smirked. "Just what I've been waiting for!" He said and climbed up Gamagoori, using him to leap up and meet the dresser to receive his new uniform. The dresser crashed to the floor and Uzu stood atop it, his shinai in hand and his new Blade Regalia MKIII donned.

"What's with the cheapo hero show crap?" Takarada taunted.

Uzu tightened his hold on his shinai. "Spare me the commentary. You face Uzu Sanageyama of the Honnouji Academy Elite Four!" He yelled. He lunged forward, attacking Takarada with his shinai. "Men! Dou! Kote! Men! Dou! Kote!" He repeated as he repeatedly swung at Takarada, each hit landing on the Dotonbori Robo. Takarada grit his teeth, firing more Sen-nari gourd missiles at Uzu, only to have them knocked away by the green haired swordsman.

Uzu jumped at Takarada again. "Hmph! Did you think I'll allow you to continue your pathetic gourd shower?! You're finished!" He yelled and swung his shinai downward, striking Takarada. "MEN!" He yelled. He stopped in his tracks as the Dotonbori Robo appeared above him, dropping brownish paste onto him.

"Wh-What the hell is this?!" He yelled.

Takarada almost cackled. "That there is crab paste slime! Once you get it off you, it never comes off! You ain't moving anymore," he taunted as Uzu struggled to break free from the paste. Takarada switched to the offensive, setting Uzu ablaze from his crab paste mold. "You're baked crab paste!" Takarada taunted.

The eccentric male turned off the flames and searched the paste, looking for Uzu only to find nothing. "Did you think your crab paste could coat me?" Uzu smirked as he appeared behind Takarada, his shinai aimed for the hole in the back of the Dotonbori Robo. "Don't underestimate me! Tsuki! Tsuki!" Uzu yelled, ramming his shinai into the hole repeatedly.

"Tsuki! Tsuki! Tsuki!" He repeated until the outer armor of the Dotonbori Robo shattered.

"Not there, not there!" Takarada yelled.

Uzu mentally rolled his eyes before ramming his shinai into the hole. "Tsuki!" He yelled, causing the Dotonbori Robo to explode. Uzu transformed back into his uniform, his back turned to the explosion. Hesitantly, he slung his shinai onto his shoulder.

*I'm gonna have to burn this shinai later...* He made a mental note to do so when he returned home.

The smoke had cleared and Uzu had found Takarada trying to sneak away, only to be stopped by Satsuki. She pressed her sheathed Bakuzan against the male's face. "You don't value anything but your own life, do you?"

"Looking down on me again, huh? You must be feeling pretty good right now," he said as Satsuki just faintly increased the pressure of Bakuzan on his face. "But this isn't over! Osaka's all about tenacity and conviction."

Satsuki furrowed her brows as she continued to look down on Takarada. "That is exactly my intent. My target here is not you." She said, glaring down at him. "Do you think I would commit a force of this size to fight mere students?" She asked.

Takarada bit his lip. "Wait... You're aren't serious!"

Satsuki glared down at him. "Where did you get the power to stand against Goku Uniforms?" She asked.

Uzu turned his head in the opposite direction, registering the faint sound of a motor. Suddenly, Ryuko and Mankanshoku appeared on the scene, her motorcycle ran over Takarada and stopped in front of Satsuki. Ryuko, dressed in a red track suit and had a red scarf around her neck, glared over at Satsuki as she took her yellow sunglasses off.

*Ryuko... Uzu thought in surprise. He smirked mentally. It's good to see you back on your feet, though...*

"Looks like you've been having fun throwing your weight around, Satsuki Kiryuin." Ryuko said as she got off her bike to stand across from Satsuki, her scissor blade pointed at the queen of Honnouji. "Wrecking an entire town? Don't you think that's a bit much?"

"You've come all this way merely to tell me that? If so, your trip was for nothing. The fate of any who defy me is sealed." Satsuki replied.

"I'm going to change that fate," Ryuko frowned. "You're going to give Senketsu back." She said.

Satsuki smirked and showed Ryuko the red glove that she donned on her hand. "Ah, so this is what you were after." She smirked before she dropped her hand to her side and unsheathed Bakuzan. "Sanageyama," she called. Uzu turned to her, awaiting her orders. "Dispose of this man," she ordered. Uzu nodded and picked up Takarada, hauling him away from the duel between Ryuko and Satsuki.

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"Shackle Regalia MKII!"

"Symphony Regalia MKII!"

"Probe Regalia MKII!"

"Blade Regalia MKIII!"

"Honnouji Academy Elite Four Regalia MKII! Four Generals Grand Garnish!" The Elite Four yelled before they charged at Nudist Beach, who finally revealed themselves to Lady Satsuki in order to protect Ryuko.

Uzu swung repeatedly as he and the other members of the Elite Four fought back against Nudist Beach, each member of the enemy organization donning a toned down version of a

Dotonbori Robo. In the background, Ryuko, now transformed with an incomplete Kamui Senketsu, fought against Satsuki.

"Senketsu Shippu!" Uzu turned his head to see Ryuko fly off, Jakuzure leaving shortly after to aid Satsuki in flight. Satsuki swung, a wave hit Ryuko and caused her to crash into the tower, nearly snapping it in half. Ryuko fell from the collapsing tower, knocked from the hit she took, her unconscious form falling far to the ground below.

"Ryuko-kun!" Uzu turned his head back to the apparent leader of Nudist Beach, Aikuro Mikisugi. The former blue haired teacher went to go to Ryuko's aid but Uzu intervened, their main objective being to defeat Nudist Beach.

Uzu pointed his shinai at the teacher, blocking Mikisugi from aiding Ryuko. Uzu grit his teeth. "You should be worrying about yourself, Aikuro Mikisugi." Uzu said, his brows furrowing. *Come on, Ryuko... Get it together.* Uzu grit his teeth again before he jumped at the blue haired teacher, swinging his shinai. Mikisugi blocked, only able to do that much in order to not take damage from Uzu.

"All students, stand down from combat!" Satsuki ordered. "We are returning to Honnouji Academy!"

Uzu knitted his brows together before he finally pulled away from Mikisugi. Had he been able to glare, he would. Suddenly an explosion emitted from the floor, signaling that Jakuzure had successfully infiltrated Nudist Beach's base and was currently working on destroying it. She emerged from the ground, but not before blowing it open, and flew over to Satsuki.

"Lady Satsuki," Jakuzure chirped, "I've destroyed the Nudist Beach base as per your orders." She reported.

Satsuki nodded. "Well done," she complimented, and sheathed Bakuzan. "With that, we have crushed the group of fools that opposed us. The objective of the Tri-City Schools Raid Trip has been accomplished. There is no need whatsoever to rescind my order to return home." Satsuki turned and boarded her helicopter, a brilliant light emitting from behind her.

"I compliment you on your valiant efforts, Ryuko Matoi! But your attack was no more than a sneak attack. It will not work next time!"

---

Uzu crossed his arms over his chest as he turned his attention to the open window he sat by, his gaze in the general direction of where Ryuko and Mankanshoku were left standing with Nudist Beach. He bit the inside of his cheek. He hadn't been able to make any progress with Ryuko, and she showed no signs of even remembering him.

He chewed on his lower lip as he tapped his foot thoughtfully. He had to think of something...

"Something wrong, monkey?" Jakuzure piped up as she hovered by Uzu's window, snapping him out of his trance. Inumuta also looked up, finding their conversation a little more interesting than whatever was on his laptop.

"J-Jakuzure... Er, nothing is wrong." Uzu replied.

Inumuta chuckled. "What a terrible liar, you are. I'll have to make a note of that," Inumuta said, turning back to his computer.

Jakuzure smirked and glanced in the general direction of where Uzu had been looking before. Would she figure it out? "Stupid monkey, you can't even see. Why do you even need a window seat?" Jakuzure asked, a smirk on her lips.

Uzu forced a chuckle and leaned back in his seat. "Hn, you'd like to know, wouldn't you, little lady Jakuzure?" Uzu replied as he made a mental note to be *less* obvious when he thought about Ryuko.

TBC.

## Chapter 7

Chapter 7:

"Welcome back, Lady Satsuki." The Elite Four greeted as Satsuki stepped down from the helicopter, heading back into Honnouji Academy.

Satsuma nodded as she continued on, the Elite Four following behind her. "You did well in the Tri-City School Raid Trip." She said, the Elite Four nodding gratefully.

"How did it go with the director?" Inumuta inquired.

"She was pleased with our results." Satsuki hummed. "She has also decided to pay a visit to Honnouji Academy.

Uzu raised his brows in surprise. "Then-" he didn't have a chance to finish before Satsuki spoke up again.

"Yes. It is time at last." She said, stopping just before she reached her tower. She turned and looked over at the Elite Four. "I'll be counting on you four." She said. The Elite Four nodded to their queen as she turned back to her tower that overlooked the heart of Honnouji Academy.

"Students of Honnouji Academy! You all did well in the Tri-City Raid. We eradicated the dens of the Kansai forces and anti-clothing guerrillas and completed our mission. For that reason," Satsuki spoke as Honnouji Academy began to change and alter itself in appearance, turning itself into a vast stadium. "We will welcome Honnouji Academy Director Ragyo Kiryuin, and in the Ragyo Stadium that bears her name, and we will hold a grand ceremony!" She declared.

*That's Lady Satsuki for you, brilliant and charismatic as ever.* Uzu thought as he shoved his hands into his pockets.

"Welcome the Director by putting forth all the energies that you have stored up within you! This is the Honnouji Academy Cultural and Sports Grand Festival!"

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Uzu yawned as he stretched his arms out, feeling his shoulders pop. He groaned, and rolled his sore shoulders. He had done a lot of heavy lifting today to help out with preparations for the Cultural and Sports Grand Festival. He couldn't wait to get home and head to bed.

"Getting old, monkey?" Jakuzure asked, looking just as tired as him.

Uzu mentally rolled his eyes. "Just sore, though I don't need my eyes to know that you probably look just as bad as I do."

"Excuse me?!" Jakuzure snapped, being held back by Inumuta.

"Now, now, snake. I'm sure Sanageyama is just cranky from all the work he's been doing." Inumuta said.

Uzu grumbled something incoherent under his breath as Gamagoori joined them. "Anyway, good work, all of you." He said. "I hope you all put I your best efforts for tomorrow as well. I'll see you all then," he said before walking off.

Jakuzure waved her hand dismissively. "Yeah, yeah, we get it. I'll see you all tomorrow. I need to get some beauty sleep," Jakuzure waved at them lazily before she headed off for her house.

Inumuta pushed his glasses up the bridge of his nose. "I suppose I'll head out too, then. Good night, Sanageyama." Inumuta said and parted from Uzu. The green haired male waved before he also headed home.

---

Uzu twitched, feeling the warm sun on his face. His limbs stretched out as he felt the soft, green grass beneath him. He was sure he didn't fall asleep on the way home and there was close to no grass in Honnouji. The only option left was that he was dreaming...

Testing out his guess, Uzu attempted to open his eyes. He surprised himself, finding that he was able to open his eyes.

*Looks like I am dreaming...* Uzu thought to himself as he looked around from where he was currently laying down on the grass.

The sky was clear and blue, white puffy clouds rolled along in the distance. A soft wind blew through the air, making the trees and blades of grass dance with it. Uzu let out a soft sigh as he watched the scenery, his eyes moving back up to look at the sky from in between the leaves. *Feels like forever since I've seen things with my own eyes...*

He was laying under a large shady tree, the branches and leaves stretched out high above his head and acted as an umbrella that shaded him from the sun, but some of the sun's rays still managed to seep through in between the foliage. He immediately recognized that he was on a hill, a high one that overlooked a grassy plain.

*I know this place...* he thought to himself, still appearing to be in a daze. *Ryuko and I used to hang out here all the time back in middle school...*

It was their retreat when they wanted to hang out, just the two of them. Sometimes they'd bring their lunches here and eat, sometimes they'd spar or fight, and sometimes they would go there when they weren't feeling too well and the other would comfort them.

"Good times..." Uzu mumbled to himself. He blinked as he found a hand reach over his head and open up, dropping a few grass blades onto his face. Uzu squeezed his eyes and coughed, bringing his hand up to brush the grass and dirt that had been dropped onto his face. He was about to yell when their voice cut him off.

"About damn time you woke up,"

Uzu opened his eyes in surprise, the dirt and grass now clear from his face. He turned his head and saw Ryuko sitting next to him, just a few inches from his shoulder, her knees pulled up to her chest.

"M-Matoi..." He muttered in surprise. Now he was sure that he was dreaming.

Ryuko gave him an odd look, crinkling her nose in a way that Uzu could only describe as cute. "Last names? Did I do something to upset you, shorty?" She asked.

Uzu frowned at the use of his childhood nickname. He hated it, *especially* because he was shorter than most of the kids in the class and Ryuko back then. "I don't think you should be calling me that," Uzu frowned at her, causing the girl to smirk. "Especially because I'm a lot taller than you are now," he replied.

Ryuko rolled her eyes before she turned back to the grass. "Then don't go calling me by my last name," she said, sticking her tongue out at him.

"Right. Sorry, Ryuko," he smiled, enjoying the way her name seemed to just slide right off the tongue. "Force of habit, I guess." He muttered the last part to himself. He continued to watch Ryuko as she sat beside him, just picking out blades of grass and letting them float off her palm when the breeze would occasionally pick up again.

Hesitantly, he reached over, gently nudging her hand with his and he immediately noticed that her red glove was no longer on her despite the fact that she was still wearing Senketsu. Ryuko looked down at her hand, nudging it back against Uzu's before she turned her head to look down at Uzu. "Ryuko..." He murmured.

Ryuko raised her brow curiously. "Yes, Uzu?" She asked.

Uzu bit the inside of his cheek, feeling his heart skip a beat at the sound of Ryuko saying his name. He gulped as he continued to look up at her with surprised eyes. "Do... Do you remember me?" He almost whispered.

Ryuko gave him an odd look again, her nose doing that cute crinkle thing that she had done earlier. "How could I forget you?" She asked, a soft chuckle passing her lips. "What kind of weird question is that?" She chuckled.

Uzu closed his eyes, a soft sigh passing through his lips. "Sorry, no reason. Just... Never mind..." He muttered. He stirred slightly when he felt Ryuko move beside him, hearing the grass rustle around him. He bit the inside of his cheek, sensing another body over his own. He contemplated opening his eyes, scared to see what may be in front of him. He sucked in a breath and finally decided to open his eyes.

He choked on a gasp, his cheeks flushing red when his eyes met with Ryuko's blue ones. She was leaning over him, her face hovering over his and her hair falling down and curtaining their faces, her dark locks tickling his cheeks. Her arms were resting on either side of his

head, trapping him underneath her. "R-Ryuko..." He stammered quietly, trying to sink into the ground as an attempt to increase the distance between he and Ryuko.

Her eyes were narrowed slightly, as though she were trying to figure out what was going on through Uzu's head. "What was with that weird question earlier?" She asked, her eyes searching his.

Uzu blinked, getting lost in her eyes. He had forgotten just how pretty and mesmerizing her blue eyes were. "... Question?" He replied dumbly.

"Uzu,"

His heart skipped again at the sound of his name. How long had it been since he had heard Ryuko say his name?

"Is there something that you're not telling me? Did something happen to me?" She asked, her brows furrowing together.

Uzu's eyes widened. He certainly wasn't expecting that question. His eyes searched hers and he realized that she wasn't going to accept "nothing" as an answer. He bit his lip. "Why don't you remember me?" He found himself asking, his voice a lot quieter than he expected.

Ryuko raised her brows in surprise. She averted her eyes for a second, biting her lip as she did so. "I don't know..." She muttered and Uzu sucked in a breath. "I don't know why I don't remember you..." She said and turned back to Uzu, her eyes pleading.

"Please, don't hate me, Uzu. I don't know why I wouldn't remember you... But please know that I'm not doing it on purpose, Uzu." She whispered.

Why did she have to phrase it like that? Why did she have to phrase it like she was the victim? Why did she have to phrase it like she was the one hurting and not him? Why did she have to phrase it like he was the one who had forgotten her and not the other way around?

Why...

"I know," Uzu found himself saying. "And I don't hate you,"

*I could never hate you.*

Ryuko nodded gratefully, her hair tickling Uzu's face as she did so. "Thank you, Uzu." She murmured, her eyes dropping to his lips for just a split second before she returned her gaze back to his eyes.

Uzu flushed. He had noticed where her attention went, and to be entirely honest, he didn't mind it. He saw her eyes flick back down to his lips and he reached up, gently tugging on her hair. She turned back to him before her eyes fluttered close as she leaned down slowly. Uzu closed his own eyes, his fingers gently tangling into Ryuko's hair as the girl's nose gently bumped against his, her lips just a breath away from his.

*Please, don't wake me up now.*



---

Uzu gasped, waking up in his bed. His heart was pounding in his chest and his fingers were shaking. He raised his hand up to his face, gently placing his fingers just below where his eyes are. He let out a soft breath, feeling the scars left over from where Iori had sewn his eyes shut. "Of course I was dreaming..." Uzu grumbled, placing his forearm over his eyes.

He sighed to himself as his cheeks heated up, his thoughts filling with his dream from before. He groaned and rolled onto his stomach, burying his face in his pillow. What the hell was he doing? He was dreaming about his best friend, for crying out loud! Dreaming about kissing her!

Uzu groaned again. Who the hell was he kidding? She wasn't *just* his best friend.

Uzu groaned again, this time one of defeat. He didn't even get to kiss her in the dream.

---

"Wow," Jakuzure piped up as Uzu approached her and the other Elite Four members. "You look terrible, monkey."

Uzu grunted in response, not even bothering to come up with some kind of comeback. "Couldn't sleep," he grumbled. After he had woken up from his dream with Ryuko, he hadn't been able to go to sleep afterward.

"Will you be alright for today?" Gamagoori inquired. A student's health was important after all.

Uzu nodded and yawned sleepily. "I'll be just fine, I'll probably wake up later today..." He mumbled, waving them off.

---

"Tomorrow is the long awaited Cultural and Sports Grand Festival!" Uzu said, slinging his shinai over his shoulder as he spoke to the group of One-Star students before him. "I want you all to set to it with determination in your hearts!" He said.

"Yes, sir!"

"I can't hear you!" Uzu yelled.

"YES, SIR!" They all yelled back before tending to their assigned tasks. Uzu smirked before he turned around to see Jakuzure ordering around a handful of One-Star students to adjust the lights in Ragyo Stadium from where she was on the center stage.

Jakuzure pointed her golden baton at them. "Straighten out those lights out a little!" She said and the lights immediately changed its position. "Good! I want the lights to wreath the stage. Tomorrow will be Honnouji Academy's climax! Let's make it more dramatic!" She said.

She cocked her head to the side, watching the students position the lights until it was to Jakuzure's liking. "Okay, right there!" Jakuzure said, signaling for the students to leave the lights as they were. She smirked at her work, looking quite proud of herself. "Good, good." She mumbled before glancing to the side to see Uzu looking in her direction.

"Slacking off, monkey?" She called down to him.

Uzu smirked. "You look like you're having fun throwing your weight around, snake." He called up to her.

She huffed in response, putting her little fists on her hips. "Excuse you, I'm just doing my job to make sure the Cultural and Sports Grand Festival is up to Lady Satsuki's expectations unlike a certain someone I'm talking to!"

"What are you talking about? I'm totally doing my job!" He yelled, swinging his shinai out to point to the group of students who were ordered to make decorations, his shinai accidentally knocking down a passing One-Star student who was carrying a box of confetti. Uzu turned in surprise when he heard the thud, the student and the box of confetti hitting the ground as the confetti spilled out and made a mess. "Oops..." Uzu muttered as Jakuzure laughed at him.

He quickly bent down to help the student pick up the mess he made. "Well when you're done with that mess you've made, wild monkey, Lady Satsuki has called everyone to the Student Council Room!" Jakuzure said.

"Jakuzure, help! The confetti won't come off my hands! It's stuck to it!"

The pinkette rolled her eyes before she hopped down the platform to help Uzu.

---

"All preparations to welcome my mother are now complete. I appreciate all your hard work." Satsuki said as each member of the Elite Four and Iori received a small drinking glass.

"Ma'am!" They all replied.

Satsuki raised her glass. "And so, let us toast to the success of the Cultural and Sports Grand Festival!" She toasted as they all downed their drinks and threw their glasses onto the floor, shattering it.

---

"Attention all students and family of Honnouji Academy! We have succeeded in the conquering of all the nation's academies! All the fools who dared to oppose our Goku Uniforms have been eliminated! Today is a celebration of those accomplishments! Eat and drink your fill! Praise the Kiryuin name!" Satsuki announced from her tower, the Elite Four behind her. "The Honnouji Academy Cultural and Sports Grand Festival begins now!"

The band started up and the students started the parade, the audience also began to eat the food catered to them until Satsuki interrupted them, signaling the arrival of the Academy Director.

"And now, what you all have been waiting for. Let us offer a welcome with the utmost respect. I present to you this academy's director, Director Ragyo Kiryuin!" Satsuki announced. A brilliant rainbow light emitted from the tower, taking over Satsuki's brilliant one. The rainbow light shrouded over the entire stadium before it concentrated at Satsuki's tower and after a puff of smoke, Ragyo Kiryuin revealed herself, a wave of applause sounding from the audience.

Satsuki stepped down from her tower to make room for Ragyo as the latter walked down the aisle, the Elite Four bowing to her and stepping to the side to make room for her. "As grand an entrance as one would expect from our director," Satsuki commented as her mother approached.

Ragyo merely flashed a small smile. "A ruler must shine like the sun at all times." She said before she stepped into Satsuki's usual spot on the tower, overlooking the heart of Honnouji Academy.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I put a question to you." Ragyo said, looking at the audience. "What is the world? The world is clothing. Life Fibers are the ruler of this world. I, Ragyo Kiryuin, know and carry out their will! Honnouji Academy was created for just that purpose. The weak will serve as the foundation for what is to come. You should consider that an honor," she said, her dazzling light emitting all around the stadium.

A button rose from the small area just before Ragyo's feet. "Now, let the celebration begin!" She said and pushed the button. Suddenly everyone in the audience was consumed by their clothes, each person letting out a fearful yell. It only continued for a few more seconds and then suddenly silence. Not a single sound was heard until Ragyo spoke again.

"Such wonderful silence... The cacophony spewed forth by the foolish creature known as humanity fades away, and nothing but tranquil fibers will fill the world." Ragyo said as she basked in the silence.

Uzu turned his head slightly as he registered the sound of an engine and metal hitting against the wall of the stadium. Suddenly Ryuko, Mikisugi, and Tsumugu appeared over the wall on their Dotonbori Robo and landed on the walkway behind Ragyo.

*Ryuko...* Uzu thought as he bit his lip.

Ryuko jumped off the Dotonbori Robo and pulled out her scissor blade, aiming it at Satsuki and Ragyo. "I'm putting an end to this, Satsuki Kiryuin!" Ryuko yelled as she stepped forward. "Turn everyone back to normal!" She demanded.

Ragyo turned to look at Ryuko as Satsuki and the Elite Four appeared behind Ragyo to look at their surprise guest. "Oh, so you are a Ryuko Matoi?" Ragyo questioned.

Ryuko grit her teeth. "You're-"

"I see." Ragyo interrupted. "And that is Kamui Senketsu? The last of Isshin Matoi's last, futile efforts. I must say, I didn't expect it to be so beautiful."

The girl with the dark hair and red streak in her hair glared up at the Director. "So you're Ragyo Kiryuin, huh? I swear, you Kiryuins love to talk down to people!" She yelled.

Ragyo smirked. "I do. I am the one who knows everything in this world." Ragyo said as the Elite Four watched Satsuki unsheathe her Bakuzan. "I am the leader of the Kiryuin Conglomerate, Rag-" the Director choked on her words and Satsuki plunged Bakuzan through the Director's back, the tip of the blade emerging from her chest cavity.

Ragyo peered down at the blade. "What are you playing at, Satsuki?" Ragyo choked on her words.

Satsuki glared up at the woman. "The time for speeches is over, Director." Satsuki spat, digging her blade further into Ragyo, causing the older woman to spit up blood. Satsuki lifted the woman while she was still attached to the blade and threw her onto the four-point star statue nearby, pinning Ragyo to it as blood rained down before Satsuki.

The queen of Honnouji glared at the Director, the Elite Four behind her. "As of this moment, Satsuki Kiryuin and Honnouji Academy are in a rebellion against you!" Satsuki declared. "I, Satsuki Kiryuin, am rising up to overthrow Life Fibers! Honnouji Academy is the fortress I created in order to defeat you!"

---

"Every last student here has been trained as a warrior to fight you - no, to fight Life Fibers! Behold, the power of Honnouji Academy!" Satsuki yelled as her students all donned their brand new Goku uniforms. "Sanageyama," she said to the green haired male. He nodded and moved to greet their other surprise guest.

Just as Harime had entered the stadium, Uzu dropped down before her, his brows furrowed and his arms crossed over his chest. "I'm the one you're to face." He said as he transformed into his Blade Regalia MKIII.

"I'm sorry, do I know you?" Harime asked as she pulled out her scissor blade.

Uzu pointed his shinai at her, his brows furrowed. "Uzu Sanageyama of the Honnouji Elite Four. I'm going to get payback for what you did to me." He said. *And for what you did to Ryuko.* He charged forward, swinging his shinai at the blonde girl only for her to deflect his attacks each time.

She landed and blocked his attack from behind. "Payback? Did I lend you something?" She asked and Uzu honestly had to think about if she were kidding or not.

Uzu grit his teeth. "You've forgotten your sneak attack on me during the Naturals Election?" He growled at her.

"Sorry!" She said and pushed his blade away before turning to him. "When a girl changes her underwear, she forgets the past too!" She said, slashing at Uzu, only for him to disappear.

He reappeared behind her and switched to the offensive as he swung his shinai. Nui braced herself but paused when his shinai seemingly disappeared into thin air. She cocked her head to the side, confused, before an onslaught of Uzu's attacks hit her repeatedly. He smirked. "Did you see that? In exchange for my sight, my blade now travels faster than light!"

---

"Matoi!"

Uzu looked back, his brows furrowing together in concern to see Ryuko fall to the ground, her mind taken over from Ragyo's mind stitching. Ryuko got up to her feet shakily, looking pissed as she charged forward and began attacking Satsuki.

Uzu clicked his tongue against his teeth. "Damn, Ryuko... Get it together." He mumbled quietly to himself before he continued fighting back against the other students of Honnouji, all of whom had also been controlled due to Ragyo's mind stitching. With all the students dealt with, he turned back to his real opponent who had been standing off to the side, enjoying the current situation at Honnouji.

"I have you now!" He yelled, thrusting his shinai into the girl's abdomen. "Shingan-Tensenzuki!" He yelled. He grit his teeth in surprise when Nui had disappeared, her dress remained in its place. Uzu stepped back, joining the rest of the Elite Four members as they stood back to back, suddenly surrounded by Nui's clones.

---

"Don't...screw...with...me!" Ryuko yelled, freeing herself from Ragyo's Mind Stitching.

Uzu smirked. *Atta girl,*

Ryuko caught her scissor blade, pointing it towards Ragyo. "For now, I'm taking her down!" She yelled, pulling her red glove to her face. "Let's to, Senketsu!" She yelled as she bit onto the pin in her glove. Before she could pull it out, Nui appeared before her.

"Long time, no see, Ryuko-chan!" Nui said, smiling at Ryuko.

Ryuko grit her teeth. "You! Nui Harime!" He yelled, glaring at the girl. She took a deep breath to calm herself down before she transformed in her Kamui Senketsu. Ryuko charged forward, her scissor blade clashing repeatedly with Nui's. Swiftly, Ryuko dodged one of Harime's attacks and reappeared behind the petite blonde.

"Remind me, were you this slow before?" Ryuko taunted.

Nui giggled and created more of her doppelgängers, only for Ryuko to defeat them all in one fell swoop. Smirking and brimming with confidence, Ryuko ran circles around the surprised Nui, clashing blades with her repeatedly.

---

"Stand aside!" Satsuki yelled as she knocked Rei Hououmaru out of the way. Satsuki continued down the walkway at full speed. "Your head is mine!" She yelled, using her blade to reflect light into Ragyo's vision and temporarily blind her. Satsuki lunged and landed gracefully behind Ragyo, her blade lined with blood as Ragyo's head fell from her shoulders.

Satsuki stood to her feet as blood rained down once more. "It is finished." She said. Satsuki's eyes widened as she turned to the sky, her brows furrowing in concern as she heard someone call her. "... I was just imagining things?" She muttered, not seeing anything in the distance.

"It's you that is finished, Satsuki,"

Satsuki gasped and turned around to find Ragyo's decapitated head speak to her. She grunted as Ragyo's left over body knocked her to the side before her body went to retrieve her head. "As long as a single thread remains, my body is able to regenerate itself." Ragyo said as she looked down at her daughter. "It seems even your Bakuzan wasn't able to sever it."

"Lady Satsuki!" The Elite Four called out. They went to aid their queen, only for Rei to stop them.

"You will not interfere," she said.

Satsuki choked as Ragyo grabbed her by the neck, lifting her off the ground before she punched her, knocking her to the ground. Shakily, Satsuki rose to her feet, Bakuzan quivering in her grip. "I've had enough of your garbage!" Satsuki yelled as she attacked. She gasped as her Bakuzan snapped against Ragyo's fist. Frozen in shock, Ragyo punched Satsuki in the gut, causing the girl to cough up blood.

"Your little scheme has given me no end to entertainment, but I think it's about time for you to return Junketsu." Ragyo said. Satsuki screamed as she was sent flying, hitting the ground hard and out cold.

---

The audience at Honnouji watched in horror as Ragyo, now donned in Kamui Junketsu, pulled Ryuko's heart from the girl's chest. Her heart shined brilliantly, looking very much like Life Fibers in appearance. Ragyo smirked down at the frightened girl. "Ryuko Matoi, you are one whose body has merged with Life Fibers, just as mine has." She said, looking down at the heart in her hand.

"All this time, you were the daughter I believed to be dead." Ragyo said.

---

The people at Honnouji stared up at the sky in horror, COVERS in the sky as far as the eye could see. Suddenly, one by one, the COVERS descended down to Honnouji. Each one descended a single red thread and attached it to an individual before the string wrapped around the individual, bringing them up to the COVERS. The suit opened up, swallowing the people and transformed into buffer versions of the original suits

The COVERS descended and stood before the audience at Honnouji, before they started to attack, thrashing about and knocking people around. The suits would capture a few people and feed them to other suits, causing chaos in the audience as they fled for their lives.

Uzu jumped and cut the thread that was pulling more people up to the suits. He landed safely on the ground, making sure that the civilians he saved were also safe. He looked over to see Mankanshoku waving people over, guiding them towards the exit. "Ryuko-chan!" Mankanshoku yelled in surprise.

The green haired male stopped in his tracks. *Ryuko? What happened?* He could only hear whatever was happening on the screen, but damn, his Shingatsu didn't work on screens. He really wished he could see what was going on.

"Very few humans are merged this perfectly with Life Fibers." He heard the Director say. "Truly, you are my daughter."

Uzu raised his brows in surprise. *Ryuko... Is what? She's... The daughter of Ragyo and...sister to Lady Satsuki?*

A scream pulled Uzu out of his trance and he looked over to see Mankanshoku being pulled up by one of the COVERS. He cursed under his breath, he was too far away to get her. "Mako!!" He heard Sukuyo scream in horror. He looked again to see Gamagoori jump for the girl.

"Cut the thread! Escape, Mankanshoku!" He yelled, reaching out for the petite brunette. COVERS jumped out of nowhere and grabbed onto Gamagoori, pulling him down to the ground. "Mankanshoku!!" He yelled for the girl as she was swallowed up by the COVERS, transforming it into one of the notably larger suits.

---

Ryuko choked on her breath, glaring at Ragyo. "Shut up!" She barked and sliced off Ragyo's hand, her heart returning to her chest cavity.

Ryuko furrowed her brows, wielding her scissor blade in hand. "My dad is Isshin Matoi! You can't possibly be my mother! That's impossible!" She yelled as Ragyo leaned down to collect her hand, placing it back on her wrist. The wound healed immediately, as though it were never cut off in the first place.

"If I'm not, how else do you explain your body?" Ragyo asked, flexing her once injured hand.

The girl with the dark hair grit her teeth and attacked Ragyo again. "I said shut up!" She screamed as Ragyo dodged with ease.

Suddenly, Nui appeared behind her a wide smile on her features. "How very interesting! I knew there was something interesting about you, Ryuko-chan!" Nui said.

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Satsuki groaned as she looked up from the rubble she was trapped under. "I'm...not done...just yet." She muttered. She pressed a switch she held in her hand and suddenly the stadium exploded, throwing its insides into chaos.

TBC.



## Chapter 8

### Chapter 8:

"Run, run!" Uzu yelled as he gestured up the hill, directing the civilians where to go. *Come on, just a bit farther...* He grit his teeth and turned to glance over his shoulder. There were still a lot more people that needed to be rescued. "Hurry! Just across this hill, there's a helicopter waiting!" He yelled, hoping that maybe people would pick up the pace at the sound of good news.

Uzu grit his teeth as he heard something flutter above. He turned around and furrowed his brows together as he spotted the Covers suits a couple yards away. "Damn, they caught up huh?" He grumbled. He clenched his hand into a fist, he needed to protect the people, his former gang members... With a deep breath, he pulled his uniform collar close to him. "Hold together..." He pleaded quietly as he transformed into his Blade Regalia MKIII.

The suits let down a few threads in hopes of capturing more humans but Uzu wasn't having it. He cut the threads with his shinai only for his Blade Regalia to release steam. Uzu's brows knitted together. "Damn, already at its limit?" He grumbled as his Blade Regalia suddenly broke, leaving him in the nude.

Uzu looked up, defenseless against the incoming suits when his former gang members appeared in front of him, each person wielding a weapon. "Boss, we'll hold 'em off here!" One of them said.

"You guys..." Uzu muttered he was about to move to stop them, but the injuries he's sustained up to this point stopped him in his tracks.

"The Northern Kanto Gang Leader Alliance has some pride, too!" Another said. "You make sure you get home safely, and make sure our Lady makes a full recovery!"

Uzu bit his lip. "*Lady*"... That was what the members of the gang had referred to Ryuko as back when they were both in the gang since she was pretty much the only girl in the gang and acted as a second leader when Uzu wasn't around. She hated it at first, but Uzu remembers her telling him that she had grown fond of it after a while.

The green haired male nodded his head, his brows knitting together. "Understood. Show those crap cloth bastards what human beings will do when their backs are against the wall!" Uzu yelled, his men charging forward and weapons in hand. The threads wrapped around the gang members, bringing them up to the suits.

"Tear 'em up a new one from the inside, guys!" Another member yelled. They were swallowed up by the suits, their weapons kicking and attacking from the inside.

Gritting his teeth, Uzu returned to guiding the people to safety. "Hurry!" He yelled. "Get aboard while they're keeping them busy!" He yelled before boarding the helicopter himself.

The helicopter lifted from the ground, heading in the direction of headquarters. They couldn't remain any longer, it would put lives at risk.

With a heavy heart, Uzu turned around just in time to see the struggle within the suits had stopped suddenly. The suits opened up again, dropping the weapons to the ground. Uzu dropped his head, his hold on the helicopter's walls tightening. "I'm sorry, guys..." He murmured as he sat on the floor, his legs hanging over the opening at the back of the helicopter.

"I saw your Northern Kanto hooligans prove their worth," Gamagoori said as he stood beside Uzu.

The green haired male sighed as he pulled a knee to his chest, resting an arm over his knee. "This is a war of attrition... I know that it won't last long." He muttered.

Gamagoori nodded. "True." He said, handing Uzu a Nudist Beach Uniform. "Even so, we did manage to save a few lives. Their sacrifice wasn't in vain." Gamagoori said.

Uzu nodded in agreement, taking the black uniform from Gamagoori's hands, silently vowing to himself that he wasn't going to let his men's sacrifice be in vain. He looked up, noticing that Gamagoori had become oddly silent. He let a small smirk appear on his face before he spoke up. "Gamagoori," he said and the large man turned to him. "We'll find her. Don't worry," Uzu assured him.

Gamagoori nodded gratefully. "Thank you, Sanageyama. I needed to hear that."

---

"Show the people we rescued to the living quarters area!" Gamagoori ordered once he, Uzu and the rescued had reached Nudist Beach's secret base. Uzu sighed as he tied his new black bandana to his person. At least he had made it back to the base.

"Good work," Jakuzure said as she appeared beside Gamagoori. "Looks like you guys had it rough, too." She said, rubbing the back of her head tiredly.

Uzu exhaled and crossed his arms over his chest. "Yeah," he replied simply. He didn't feel like talking about it and he was grateful that Jakuzure didn't ask. Gamagoori turned and noticed that another person had tagged along with Jakuzure.

"Is that Mankanshoku's little brother?" Gamagoori asked.

"Yup. He and his friends had been living in the sewers under Honnou Town. They're an impressive pack of rats." Jakuzure said, placing her hand on her hip. Uzu exhaled again before he began walking off, his arms still crossed over his chest.

"I'm off, I've got something I need to check on," he muttered.

Jakuzure raised a brow as she turned to Gamagoori. "What's his problem?" She asked with a huff.

"He's experienced quite the loss earlier, I'm sure he just wants to be alone right now." Gamagoori offered.

---

Uzu knocked on the door to the infirmary and peeked inside. "Ah, Uzu!" Sukuyo greeted the boy. She had finally managed to pry his name from him after his numerous visits to check up in Ryuko. "Back from your mission already? How did it go?" She asked, as she got up from her seat by Ryuko's bedside, offering it to him.

Uzu nodded gratefully as he took Sukuyo's seat. "I-It went fine, thank you. We saved more people," he said, specifically leaving out the part where his gang members had sacrificed themselves. He was sure the kind lady didn't want to hear anything like that, especially not while her own daughter is missing. Uzu turned his attention to Ryuko, who was still tucked into bed and sound asleep. "Um... H-How is she?" Uzu asked.

"She's making good progress," Barazo, Mankanshoku's father, spoke up and it was probably the best news that Uzu had heard in a while. "All her injuries have healed, though I can't say when she'll wake up." Barazo said, crossing his arms over his chest.

Uzu nodded to the man gratefully. "I see, th-that's good to hear." Uzu said as he leaned over toward Ryuko, a small, forced smile on his lips. "Hey, Ryuko, a...a few friends of ours from middle school say hello. They... They just wanted to make sure you were recovering okay." Uzu shared, his voice struggling to remain steady.

"Uzu? Did you want a moment alone with Ryuko?" Sukuyo offered.

The green haired male stood to his feet and shook his head. "Ah, n-no thank you. I have a meeting to head to. I was just about to head out, I only wanted to make sure that she was okay." Uzu said as he looked down at Ryuko, resting his palm on her forehead.

Sukuyo smiled gently. "I see... Well if she wakes up, I'll make sure that you're the first to know," Sukuyo said. Uzu turned to her, smiling gratefully.

"Thank you, I really appreciate it."

---

Ryuko groaned, her hand clenching the sheets she laid in as she dreamed. She dreamed of a handsome young man who faked his death, changed his body and face in order to protect her as an infant.

*Dad...* she immediately recognized him. "Dad... I..." She whimpered, still asleep.

Suddenly her dream changed, the scene she was looking at changed to an entirely different one. It was her and that Sanageyama kid from their most recent 'match', if you could call it that, the one from the Natural Elections. He was standing a cross from her, talking to her, his hands in his pockets as usual. He was complimenting her on her strength and growth as a fighter.

The scene changed again to their second match, the one shortly after he had sewn his eyes shut. He sounded and looked absolutely menacing and had an intimidating aura. Ryuko couldn't remember the last time she had felt fear like that.

Another change in scenery and Ryuko found herself standing in front of the Sanageyama kid again. They were in the gym, their first match. He made a great opponent, Ryuko remembered. She had arrived at the gym practically jumping up and down. She couldn't wait to take down one of Honnouji's Elite Four. He certainly didn't make the match a boring one.

The scene changed again and Ryuko found herself standing in front of a green haired male. She looked around curiously, noticing that she had also changed in appearance. She was younger, a year or two younger than she currently was. She looked exactly like what she looked like back in middle school. She looked back at the green haired boy in front of her. His hair was wild, spiked backward and he wore a "Bad Boy" shirt underneath his uniform. He was shorter than her and he stood similarly to how Sanageyama would; his hands in his pockets. Looking at the boy now, Ryuko was almost sure she was looking at a younger version of Sanageyama.

Ryuko blinked in surprise as he grinned at her, a mischievous glint in his gray eyes.  
*"Transferring to Honnouji, Matoi? What? Can't stand the thought of being apart from me?"*  
He teased, and the scene changed once more.

The dark haired girl looked down at herself. She was a lot younger, like what she looked like back in elementary school. She looked in front of her to find the green haired boy again. *Sanageyama*, She was almost entirely sure that it was him. The kid was flushing red, his hands shoved into his pockets.

*"You fight well, Ryuko Matoi..."* He complimented and pulled one of his hands out and held it out to her. He finally turned to her, offering a small grin. Confused, Ryuko looked between his hand and his face before she moved her own hand, placing it in his.

*"You too, Uzu Sanageyama."*

Ryuko awoke with a gasp, her breathing heavy. She found herself in a dark room and laying in a bed. She looked around, faintly recognizing Sukuyo and Barazo's silhouette outside in the hallway through the curtain that separated her bed from the rest of the room. She exhaled, finally releasing the sheets that she had clutched onto so desperately. She was grateful to find that no one else was in the room with her, not even Senketsu.

She inhaled and exhaled slowly, repeatedly as she lifted her arm to rest it over her eyes. She flinched as her arms came into contact with a warm wetness by her eyes.

She had been crying.

*Why?* She thought to herself as she wiped her tears away. She had no reason to be crying nor did she have any idea as to why she would feel the need to cry. She paused and her thoughts floated back to the dream she just had.

She was lying to herself. She knew why she was crying.

A soft whimper passed escaped her lips, one that was much too quiet for others to hear, as a few more fresh tears spilled from her eyes. "Uzu..." She whimpered inaudibly.

*I remember.*

---

Uzu looked over to the sound of a dog barking. He found it by one of the noticeably larger, buffer Covers suits. He nudged Gamagoori and pointed him towards where the dog was. Gamagoori's eyes widened. "That's the Mankanshoku family's pet dog!" He paused, the gears in his head turning. "Could it be?!"

Gamagoori rushed over, Iori's new weapon in his hold. He blocked the suit's punch with one hand, and press the cannon-like mechanism against the suit. He pressed a button from the inside, and the cannon started to whir and pull on the suit. Another moment passed and Gamagoori pressed the button again, this time, a person came shooting out from the back end of the cannon-like mechanism. Gamagoori immediately recognized the brunette with the bob-cut. "Mankanshoku!" He yelled.

"She's out!" Iori and Inumuta yelled together over the radio.

"Cloth-form Covers are fed energy from their parent body, the Original Life Fiver, via a linkage thread!" Iori said.

"That's why we can cause them to shut down if we sever that." Inumuta said.

"However, human-form Covers have swallowed humans to use as energy sources, so they can operate autonomously."

"If we extract the human it's swallowed, the Cover will shut down without its energy source!"

"Yes!" Inumuta and Iori said together. "We thin out their number and rescue our allies! A weapon combining offense and defense!"

"This is the Emergency Rescue Suction Device!" Gamagoori said.

*A little eccentric, don't you think?* Uzu smirked as Gamagoori turned his back to the nude Mankanshoku girl.

"Mankanshoku, are you alright?" Gamagoori asked. Uzu smirked and crossed his arms over his chest. He didn't need his sight to know that Gamagoori was probably blushing.

Mako rose to her feet, energetic as ever. "Yup! Mako Mankashoku has returned!" She looked around curiously before she turned to Gamagoori, her eyes widening. "Wait! You saved me, Gamagoori-senpai?" She asked in disbelief, her little dog hopping around at her feet.

Gamagoori nodded. "Yes, I gave your little brother my word," Gamagoori said.

*Oh kill me now, they're so cute.* Uzu thought, biting his tongue.

Gamagoori handed Mankanshoku a Nudist Beach Uniform. "Here," he said, "put this on."

Mankanshoku looked down and flushed. "Oh! I'm in my birthday suit!" She said and quickly grabbed the uniform.

Jakuzure smirked and placed her hands on her hips. "Alright, quit your flirting. If it works, go rescue more people." Jakuzure spoke up and Uzu had to suppress the urge to laugh at Gamagoori's flustered expression.

"I wasn't flirting!" He denied all too quickly as Mankanshoku struggled to put on her uniform. Gamagoori flushed, looking noticeably embarrassed. "We'll talk later." He mumbled and turned back to Mankanshoku. "Go somewhere safe," his eyes widened in surprise to find Mankanshoku had turned her nude form to him, for him to see her in all her glory.

"Alright!" She said, finally able to get the uniform on. Suddenly, the Covers changed form, using their sleeves to resemble harps and they used their ties to run along the strings, creating a horrid screeching noise.

Uzu grit his teeth and clamped his hands over his ears in hopes of drowning out some of the noise. "What are they doing?!" He grit out. Suddenly, having an increased sense of hearing really sucked. An explosion sounded and Uzu turned to see that the infirmary where Ryuko was staying had blown up.

*Ryuko...* he thought worriedly. Much to his relief, Ryuko emerged from the flames, although she looked rather pissed. She had her scissor blade in one hand, and the torn up sheets from her bed wrapped around like a cloak. "Cut out all the sawing racket, you bastards!" She growled and aimed her scissor blade at the rows of Covers. "Get lost!" She yelled, swinging her blade once. The Covers all released the humans they had used as energy sources before exploding.

"With just one attack?!" Uzu yelled in disbelief as he guarded himself from the heat of the explosions.

"She even rescued everyone who was inside the Covers!" Jakuzure added. Senketsu suddenly appeared behind Ryuko, only for her to get angrier than she already was.

"Get away from me!" She hissed. "I'm never wearing you again!"

*Ryuko...*

The girl with the dark haired turned to the sailor uniform, glaring at him. "Just looking at you pisses me off! Cause were both the same breed of monster! That's right! I'm not a human!" She tightened her hand into a fist. "I'm a Life Fiber monster!" She screamed.

"That's crazy, Ryuko-chan!" Mankanshoku interrupted, causing Ryuko to look towards the brunette. "Senketsu is your friend! That attitude doesn't sound like the Ryuko-chan that I know! It doesn't! It doesn't!" Mankanshoku said.

*She's right...* Uzu thought as he bit the inside of his cheek. *This isn't you at all, Ryuko.*

Ryuko merely turned her head away. "I'm not the Ryuko you know. The old me was one big lie. I'm a monster! I'm not a normal human, I'm a monster like Ragyo that can't be killed!" She yelled.

A giggle was heard and the others turned to see a copy of Nui before them, made from the remains of the Covers that Ryuko had destroyed earlier. "Someone got up on the wrong side of the bed, Ryuko-chan!" Nui chirped.

Ryuko grit her teeth. "Nui Harime!" She hissed at the blonde girl, who only giggled in response. She floated around Ryuko, taunting the girl about being upset at the wrong person, that Ryuko should be upset at Nui because she killed her father. Ryuko grit her teeth, swinging wildly at the Nui copy. It tore to shreds only for the image of Nui to be replaced by Ragyo.

"That's the way, my daughter." Ragyo said.

"I'm not you daughter!" She hissed in response, slicing repeatedly at the copy of Ragyo.

"Do you hate your mother?" Ragyo taunted. "Do you resent Ragyo?"

Ryuko glared up at the woman. "I'll kill you." She hissed through gritted teeth.

Ragyo smirked in response. "Come then! Let us make Honnouji Academy the place where this mother-daughter feud is put to rest!" She said before she and the copy of Nui disappeared entirely.

"Just you wait. I'm coming for you!" She said before walking forward.

Mikisugi, in his Dotonobori Robo - or DTR, as he adamantly referred to it as - stepped forward. "Wait, Ryuko-kun." He said. "It's a trap. It's dangerous to walk into it in a blind rage." He advised.

Ryuko glared at him. "Quit trying to act like you're still my teacher!" She spat as she cut him out of the DTR. "This is all your fault from the start! You knew everything, and you may have been acting all nonchalant, deep down, you were laughing at me as some monster freak!" She yelled, tears forming in the corners of her eyes.

Mikisugi rose to his feet. "That's not true," he tried to amend. Ryuko tried to attack him only for Tsumugu to cut in between them, aiming his gun at Ryuko.

"So it looks like clothing and humans can't understand each other after all." He said, his gun aimed for Ryuko's head.

Ryuko swung her blade, her tears falling from her eyes. "Move! Anybody who gets in my way gets smashed! ... No matter who it is!" She said as she cleanly cut off the upper halves of two buildings in the distance.

*She hesitated in that last sentence...* Uzu noted. His brows furrowed together in concern.

"She destroyed those buildings in a single blow..." Gamagoori said in disbelief.

Uzu looked down sadly, clenching his fists at his side. "I sense intense malice..." He voiced.

Ryuko turned to them. "That's right! This is who I am now! You people can all take off your Goku Uniforms! But me, I'm fused with Life Fibers till the day I die! Senketsu wasn't the weapon that was created to kill its fellow Life Fibers!" Ryuko yelled as she thrust her scissor blade into the ground. "It was me..." She said, her voice struggling to remain steady.

Ryuko turned to Senketsu and looked down at the sailor uniform. "If I've made myself clear, don't cling to me anymore." She said before walking off.

"He will cling to you!" Mankanshoku said as she grabbed Senketsu and cut Ryuko off. "I mean, Senketsu is your friend and your Sunday Best! He's going to cling to you forever and ever, just like some outfit that's full of static electricity!" Mankanshoku said when she pulled back suddenly, feeling an actual static shock.

Ryuko merely ignored her and continued walking on. Mikisugi went to stop her, only to have Tsumugu hold him back. Uzu grit his teeth. He couldn't just let her leave, he couldn't just let her walk into that trap while she was this upset. He had to stop her. He moved forward.

"Sanageyama?" Jakuzure muttered as Gamagoori stopped the green haired male. He broke from Gamagoori's grip and hurried over to Ryuko.

"Ryuko!" He called her. She stopped in her tracks and turned to look at him. Her eyes widened and she took a step back in surprise.

"Stay back!" She said. Uzu stopped himself, his brows knitted together. *She sounded...scared?*

"Ryuko, wai-" he stopped when Ryuko pointed her scissor blade at his throat.

Uzu raised his hands up in a placating manner. "Ryuko, please-"

"Don't try to stop me." She interrupted. Her brows furrowed together and she finally pulled back her blade before running off towards Honnouji. Uzu dropped his hands, the sound of Ryuko's footsteps getting further and further from him.

"Did you just call her 'Ryuko'?" Jakuzure spoke up, snapping Uzu out of his trance.

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"You're gonna have to talk about it eventually, monkey..." Jakuzure said, narrowing her eyes at the green haired male beside her.

He nodded slowly, his grip on his sword tightening. "Yeah, I know..." He looked up just in time to hear a missile being fired. "After we rescue Lady Satsuki," he declared as Tsumugu positioned them over a balcony just as Satsuki had emerged from the door. She looked around, surrounded by the Covers. In surprise, she looked up, just as Gamagoori, Jakuzure, and Uzu jumped from the helicopter to land before her and cut her free of her shackles.

"Lady Satsuki!" They said, surrounding her and turning their backs to her.



"You'll catch a cold. Here, take this." Jakuzure said, handing her friend a cloak. Satsuki took it gratefully and covered her nude form up as the Elite guarded her.

"Forgive us for taking so long to come for you," Gamagoori apologized.

Satsuki shook her head. "No, the Elite Four's timing is impeccable as always." Satsuki said as she and the Elite returned to the helicopter. As Uzu let Satsuki claim his seat, he looked down at Honnouji, it's insides in chaos. He let out a short gasp and turned to Satsuki.

"Lady Satsuki, have you seen Ryuko here?" He asked urgently.

Satsuki nodded once. "Yes, I saw her wi-" she stopped and turned back to Uzu, her brows knitting together. "'Ryuko'...? Sanageyama, explain when we get to the base." She demanded.

Uzu nodded and lowered his head. "Yes, Lady Satsuki."

---

"Sanageyama," Satsuki called from her seat at the head of the S.S. Naked Sol. She sipped her tea and looked down at the green haired male. "Explain," she demanded, turning back to her tea. Uzu nodded as he felt everyone's eyes turn to him. It's no surprise they'd be at least a little curious.

"It's no grand tale," Uzu began. "Matoi - Er... Ryuko and I have simply known each other since elementary school, we were a grade apart from each other. We've been best friends since then, to be specific. We...lost touch after I had graduated from middle school and started attending Honnouji Academy. I hadn't heard from her in years and the day that she appeared at Honnouji, the first day that she arrived there, it was the first time that I had seen her in a long time." Uzu shared.

Satsuki quirked a brow. "You recognized her immediately?" She inquired.

Uzu nodded. "Yeah, she had the same hair style. And the red streak in her hair is a noticeable trait of hers. It's also kind of hard to forget the girl who once broke your ribcage for stealing her lunch." Uzu chuckled.

"I see," Satsuki murmured.

"Did she recognize you?" Mikisugi asked.

The green haired male shook his head, his brows knitting together. "No, when I went to confront her the next day, she didn't seem to recognize me at all. I even told her that we were friends before," Uzu confessed.

"And how did she react?" Satsuki asked.

"She said that she still didn't recognize me. She even told me that she would remember having a friend growing up..." Uzu shared.

"She doesn't remember you?" Gamagoori asked, surprised.

Uzu shook his head. "I've been trying to jog her memory ever since," the green haired male confessed.

Satsuki looked up from her tea. "And have you made any progress?" Uzu shook his head and suddenly the boat shook as something crashed onto the deck. They all turned to see a lone figure standing at the heart of the wreckage.

"I'll smash you!" Ryuko said once the smoke had cleared. "I'll smash you all!"

"Ryuko!" Uzu yelled.

"Is that Junketsu she's wearing?!" Jakuzure asked. Ryuko laughed and swung her scissor blade around, causing a strong wind to pick up and knocking the Nudist Beach machines to fly off the deck of the ship. Tsumugu raced forward, entering his personalized DTR in order to stop Ryuko.

Satsuki rose to her feet and Uzu and Jakuzure turned to her, handing her the two pieces of her Bakuzan. "Thank you," she said, taking the swords. "Buy me some time," she requested before she headed inside.

"Buy her time?" Jakuzure repeated, turning back to Ryuko to see her standing over Tsumugu, ready to kill him.

Uzu grit his teeth and ran over to the edge of the outlook where he and the others were standing. "Ryuko!" He yelled, capturing the girl's attention. She looked over at Uzu as he slid down the ramp to join her on the deck. She raised her brows in surprise before she jumped over to him, landing right in front of him. Uzu stepped back in surprise, feeling a strong wind when Ryuko landed before him.

"Ryu-" he stopped short when Ryuko grabbed his face, turning it so she could look at it from different angles.

"I've seen your face somewhere before," she said, looking at him expectantly. She blinked before she turned his face back to face hers. "Uzu!" She said in surprise.

Uzu raised his brows in disbelief. "You remember?" He whispered.

Ryuko laughed and cupped his chin. "How could I ever forget you, Uzu?" She replied, looking up at him.

He furrowed his brows. "Get it together, Ryuko. Why the hell are you wearing Junketsu?" He growled at her.

"You're so cute when you're upset, Uzu." She cooed. "My mother gave me Junketsu. Doesn't it look great on me, Uzu? I've never felt so powerful before." She said and directed his gaze down to her body.

"Ah, I forgot you had your eyes sewn shut..." She said, jerking his face back to look at hers. She narrowed her eyes at him. "Such a shame too. You had such pretty eyes..." She said.

Uzu grit his teeth. "You're not Ryuko," he spat at her.

"You offend me, my dear Uzu. You can't even recognize that your dearest friend from childhood is standing before you? And that she *finally* remembers you?" Ryuko questioned. Uzu growled at her and she laughed in response. She was about to say something when a bright light cut her off. She turned to see Satsuki rise from the lower compartment below the deck, donned in Senketsu.

Ryuko laughed as she turned her head towards Satsuki. "Oh, so it's come to this? The two of you have teamed up, huh?" She asked. Satsuki furrowed her brows, sending a glare in Ryuko's direction. "How rude of you, Satsuki. Interrupting my emotional reunion with Uzu here." Ryuko chuckled as she turned back Uzu, examining his face once more.

"Sanageyama, step back." Satsuki ordered.

Ryuko glanced over at Satsuki, "Oh? You want to fight already, Satsuki? That's fine by me," Ryuko said and turned back to Uzu.

He furrowed his brows. "What are you-" he stopped when Ryuko pulled him down, forcing her lips onto his. Uzu's brows raised in alarm and his cheeks warmed up when he felt Ryuko's tongue slip into his mouth. Just as soon as it had happened, Ryuko pulled back and shoved him away.

Ryuko smirked at Uzu as the blushing male placed a hand over his racing heart. "You like that? I'll be back for more when I'm finished with her." Ryuko smirked as she turned to Satsuki, her scissor blade slung over her shoulder.

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Ryuko knocked Satsuki aside, using the blunt end of her scissor blade before transforming it into its Decapitation Mode. She walked over to Satsuki, ready to kill until Jakuzure fired the missiles as she walked right into firing range. "Don't you dare mock Satsuki!" Jakuzure yelled as she fired more missiles at Ryuko. "Satsuki's sandcastle is made of steel! It won't collapse that easily!" She yelled.

Ryuko sliced the missile apart, knocking them aside. "Butt out!" Ryuko yelled. Uzu emerged from the smoke, a pair of tailor's daggers in his hands as he charged at Ryuko.

He swung at her, able to keep up with her pace. "If you can't see what's in her heart, you can't see anything!" Uzu yelled, meeting each of Ryuko's strikes with his own.

Ryuko glared at him. "Quit pissing me off! What can you do with that little knife?" She challenged.

Uzu smirked. "I can keep up with you, can't I?" He smirked before jumping out of the way. The smoke cleared and Ryuko found herself in front of three oversized cannons. Inumuta pressed the trigger, firing at Ryuko. The smoke cleared and she remained unharmed, but she looked pissed.

"Did you think that would do anything to Junketsu?" She growled. She let out a gasp when she felt Gamagoori attach the Emergency Rescue Suction Device to her back, proceeded to forcefully pull her out of Junketsu. "Son of a..." Ryuko growled, glaring at Satsuki.

The device suddenly stopped, jamming in its process of separating Ryuko from Junketsu. "Huh? I can't separate Matoi!" Gamagoori yelled. Satsuki's eyes widened as she heard a familiar giggle.

"Run! Gamagoori!" She ordered as Nui suddenly appeared, cutting the Suction device in half. Gamagoori and Satsuki jumped away as the device exploded. The smoke cleared, revealing Nui hugging Ryuko tightly.

"Ryuko will never be able to take of Junketsu!" The blonde giggled.

"And why not?" Satsuki asked.

"Cause Junketsu's Life Fibers are tightly linked with the ones in Ryuko's body!" She said and pulled back Ryuko's collar to reveal the Life Fibers. "If you try to pull Junketsu off, they'll snap and Ryuko will die from shock!"

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"Ryuko! Destroy her along with Senketsu! That's what Lady Ragyo wants too!" Nui yelled to Ryuko.

The girl with the dark hair stood to her feet, narrowing her eyes. "Got it." She said and turned her attention to Mankanshoku, who was now dressed in Senketsu. Before Ryuko had a chance to attack, Satsuki intervened, stabbing her Bakuzan in Junketsu and tearing the chest open, opening a wound over Ryuko's heart.

"Now, Mankanshoku! Jam Senketsu into the wound! Senketsu, use your strength to shake Ryuko's Life Fibers loose from Junketsu!" Satsuki ordered as she kept the wound open.

Mankanshoku nodded, her bright brown eyes filling with determination. "On it!" She said and took Senketsu off. The girl jammed the sailor uniform into Ryuko's wound, allowing Senketsu to get sucked into the wound along with Mankashoku.

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The ship trembled and Mankashoku and Senketsu popped out from Ryuko's wound, followed by a large, glittering, black wave.

*What's going on?!* Uzu thought as he grabbed onto Jakuzure to prevent her from washing away and then grabbed onto Gamagoori so *he* wouldn't wash away. As soon as it had happened, it stopped, and Ryuko stood at the heart of it, looking exhausted.

*Ryuko...*

"Oopsie! Looks like they failed to win her over." Nui spoke up. She turned around, raising her scissor blade into the air. "Ryuko! Let's sink this tub!" She said. Before she could move,

Ryuko's scissor blade cut through the air and flew through Nui's body, bring the blonde girl along as it inserted into the wall, trapping Nui with it. Nui looked over her shoulder, her eyes wide and filled with confusion. "What?" She asked.

Ryuko rose to her feet, glaring at Nui. "Give your crap a rest! How dare you bastards put me into this outfit!" She yelled as she started to pull Junketsu from her body. "I'm tired of this!" She screamed.

"Ryuko!" Mankanshoku and Senketsu yelled in alarm.

"I want it off!"

"Ryuko-kun!" Mikisugi yelled.

"I want it off!"

"Transfer student!" Jakuzure yelled.

"Matoi!" Gamagoori yelled.

"Ryuko!" Uzu yelled.

"I WANT IT OFF!" Ryuko screamed, her blood starting to spill to the floor.

"Stop, Matoi!" Satsuki yelled. "If you tear it off, you'll die!" She warned

"I'd rather be dead!" Ryuko yelled. "I have to take this off even if I die!" Ryuko screamed, her blood raining down as she finally freed herself from Junketsu.

She breathed heavily and peeked through her blood soaked hair. "Because if I don't... I won't be able to wear Senketsu again!"

*She's back...* Uzu thought with a breath of relief, a look of amazement on his face.

His Ryuko was finally back.

TBC.

## Chapter 9

### Chapter 9:

Ryuko breathed heavily, nearly collapsing to the floor from exhaustion as she finally freed herself from Junketsu. "Ryuko!" Mako yelled in concern. "Are you alright?" She asked.

"It hurts! It hurts like hell!" She yelled tiredly. "But... It's what I deserve for being such a dumbass!"

Uzu turned his head to the side when he heard Nui remove the scissor blade from her back, her wound healing instantly. "By the way..." The blonde said as she jumped to the floor, both scissor blades in her hands. "It was a mistake to throw your scissor blade at me. You can't defeat me! And now I have both halves!" She chirped.

"Go, Senketsu!" Mako yelled. "Be with Ryuko!" She yelled, throwing the sailor uniform towards Ryuko. Nui jumped in between, swinging the scissor blades at Senketsu, only for the uniform to jump over her and use her as a spring board. When Senketsu made it over to Ryuko, she immediately put him on and transformed into Kamui Senketsu.

With the transformation complete, Ryuko sent a glare in Harime's direction. "Harime!" Ryuko growled, causing the blonde to let out a nervous chuckle and shrink from Ryuko's intimidating aura.

Harime composed herself and tucked her arms behind her back in a nonchalant manner. "Aw, but I'd tailored Junketsu just for you!" Harime whined playfully. "I won't let you wear that lame getup!" Harime yelled, swinging the scissor blades and causing a purple wave to fire at Ryuko.

Ryuko merely lifted her hand to block the attack, the wave bounced off the back of her hand and went flying into the ocean. "Quit while you're ahead. I'm never taking Senketsu off." Ryuko declared. "Mako and Satsuki's blood is flowing through Senketsu now. He's way warmer and feels better in me than that monster, Junketsu!" She said.

The blonde scoffed and attacked Ryuko, who had ducked out of the way just in time. "What's with this 'friends' garbage? It's so gross I'm gonna barf!" She yelled.

Ryuko frowned and turned her arms into blades. "Don't talk crap about it!" She yelled as she blocked Harime's attack. "The word 'friends' don't even come close to covering it! They're something more! Something I can't explain! That's what Mako Mankanshoku and Senketsu are to me!" Ryuko shoved Harime back, the pair creating a distance between each other.

"You people only see one thing. To make it so the whole world is cut from the same cloth -- Life Fibers. But you see, I'm never gonna let that happen!" Ryuko declared. "The world is better off having bat-crap crazy people wandering around it!"

A wicked smile made its way onto Harime's lips as she lifted the scissor blades, aiming them for Ryuko. "Darn it, that's hey I hate humans!" She said before lunging forward, her blades still aimed for Ryuko. "If that's how you want to die, go ahead and die without being understood ever!" She yelled. Ryuko stood her ground, pulling her blades closer to her. Just before Harime could reach her, Ryuko slid in between the gaps between the blades and used her arm blades to deflect the scissor blades. She turned her arms back to normal and grabbed at the handles, before bashing her head against Harime's. Ryuko kneed the girl in the stomach and ripped the scissor blades from the blonde's grip before she kicked her off, sending Harime through piles of debris.

"Dad's scissor blade..." Ryuko said looking down at them before she pointed one at Harime. "I finally have them back!"

Harime emerged from the debris, looking quite upset. "In that case, maybe I'll make the people you're trying to protect attack you!" She said, raising her hands as a cloud of Life Fibers appeared over everyone's heads. "Have a taste of Mind Stitching!" She said.

Ryuko frowned and charged forward. "It's no use!" She yelled, cutting through all the fibers.

"Oops, sorry about that! That was a decoy!" Harime said as she reappeared behind Ryuko, a needle in her hand. She drove the needle through Ryuko's neck, a wide smile on her face. "It's all over, Ryuk-" she stopped when Ryuko suddenly disappeared from in front of her.

"Yeah, for you!" Ryuko said as she reappeared behind Nui. She swung her scissor blades, cutting off Harime's arms.

"MY ARMS!" The blonde screamed. "My arms, my arms, my arms, my arms!" She screamed in horror before she turned to Ryuko, the blood spilling from her new wounds.

"Do you have any idea how valuable my arms are?!" Harime screeched. "They're the arms of the Grand Couturier!"

Ryuko shrugged. "That's why I cut them off." She replied.

Harime giggled, suddenly turning back into her cheery disposition. "Kidding! Even if you cut them off, they'll pop right back, good as new!" She said, watching her severed arms squirm before they stopped suddenly. Harime yelled in horror as Ryuko stepped on them, crushing them beneath her boot and reverting them back into Life Fibers.

Once she had absorbed the Life Life fibers, Ryuko turned back to Harime, pointing her scissor blade at the seething blonde. "Just give it up, Harime." The dark haired girl advised.

Harime hunched over, appearing to have reached her breaking point. "This can't be happening! You're really making me angry! Every last one of you! I'm pissed, I'm pissed, I'm pissed, I'm pissed!" She yelled.

Before Ryuko could make another move, a Covers suit dropped before her, separating her from Harime. Numerous other Covers joined as well as a helicopter flew over head. Rei dropped in and grabbed Harime before they made a hasty escape.

"Hououmaru!" Satsuki yelled. Immediately, Inumuta pressed a button, the cannons on the S.S. Naked Sol aiming towards the retreating helicopter and opening fire but a few Covers blocked the way, ensuring the helicopter's retreat.

Ryuko frowned. "You're not getting away! Senketsu Shippu!" She yelled and leaped into the air, only to fall back down when Senketsu didn't transform.

Satsuki smirked. "Hououmaru made a mistake because she was desperate to rescue Harime," she voiced.

"She's right!" Mikisugi piped up, holding onto an Emergency Rescue Suction Device. "Which makes this the golden opportunity," he said as Tsumugu charged forward, three of the Suction devices already attached to his DTR.

"It was nice of them to bring us both life Fibers and new members for the cause!" He said, freeing people from the Covers.

Mikisugi nodded as he walked over to the rack of Suction Devices that Iori had prepared for the team. "Exactly! Don't just stand around doing nothing, Elite Four, get to work!" Mikisugi said. Uzu and Jakuzure went over, each getting their own Emergency Rescue Suction Device.

"Give me these!" Uzu heard Gamagoori say. He glanced over to see Gamagoori attach nine of the Suction devices to his person. "Nonuple-mount Emergency Rescue Suction Device!" Gamagoori yelled.

*Show off...* Uzu thought before he turned back to the task at hand. They charged forward, each attaching their Suction device to one of the Covers before they freed the individual trapped inside. Satsuki looked in surprise, immediately recognizing some of the people that had been freed as students and club presidents from Honnouji Academy.

"Medics!" Satsuki called. "Tend to the students who have been extracted!" She ordered.

"On it!" The Mankanshoku family replied as they quickly gathered up the unconscious students.

"Sewing Club, collect the Life Fibers!" Iori ordered, bringing out vacuums to gather the stray threads. "Bring them to the lab, ASAP!"

Inumuta looked down at the screen he sat before, waiting for confirmation that all fibers had been collected. When the screen beeped, he spoke up. "Collection complete." He reported.

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"Planning on putting it on again, huh?" Ryuko asked as she stood behind Satsuki. "Can you wear that monster?"

Satsuki lowered her head, her hair blowing in the wind. "I won't make the same mistake twice." She relied. "What do you want from me?" She inquired.



"Let me belt you one." Ryuko replied. "If I punch you without holding back and you're still on your feet, I'll admit that you have the strength to fight alongside me." The dark haired girl said.

"Ryuko, that's crazy." Mikisugi warned. "A bare-skinned human would die if hit by you while synchronized." The blue haired man said.

"She's no ordinary human right? She's the great Satsuki Kiryuin." Ryuko reasoned.

Satsuki turned to Ryuko, taking her hands out of her pockets of the black trench coat she wore. "Very well. Strike me. We face Ragyo Kiryuin. If I am to fall here, I have no chance of winning this battle." Satsuki said. "I shall withstand your blow." She declared.

Ryuko smirked as she got into position, clenching her fist. "Show me that you aren't all talk... Here it comes!" Ryuko bit her lip and waited a moment before she charged forward, her fist aiming for Satsuki's face. Much to her surprise, Gamagoori cut in and was sent tumbling to the ground after Ryuko's punch.

"Gamagoori!" Satsuki yelled in surprise.

Ryuko grit her teeth. "Stay out of this, you bastard!" She yelled before she clenched her other fist, and moved to punch Satsuki again only for Uzu to cut in this time, her fist colliding with his face. He toppled to the ground and Ryuko glared at him. "You too?! What is it with you guys?!" She yelled.

Gamagoori and Uzu rose to their feet, the latter rubbing his sore face. "Are you mocking me, Matoi?!" Gamagoori yelled. "I'm asking if you hit me with everything you got!" He yelled.

"Yeah, I did!" Ryuko shot back.

"Don't make me laugh! If that's true, then why are we still alive?" Gamagoori questioned.

"I thought ordinary humans would die if you hit them full-force!" Uzu said.

"You got in the way, so I pulled them!" Ryuko yelled as the Elite Four moved in front of Satsuki, dividing her from Ryuko.

"Our face is Lady Satsuki's face! Our limbs are Lady Satsuki's limbs!" Jakuzure said. "For her, we could be smashed or sliced off and have no regrets!"

"However," Inumuta added, "these limbs have a mind of their own, so we can be rather obstinate."

"We, the Honnouji Academy Elite Four, are Lady Satsuki's irresistible spear! Her unyielding shield!" Uzu yelled.

"If you want to strike Lady Satsuki, strike us!" Gamagoori yelled. "But you'll find that we don't yield so easily!"

Ryuko looked at them in disbelief. "What the hell is it with you people?! I don't get you at all-" Ryuko stopped, a short gasp of realization passing her lips. She turned to Satsuki in surprise. "So... You're protected by a bunch of bat-crap crazy people like I am?" She asked.

Satsuki smiled softly. "It would seem so." She said as the Elite Four parted, allowing Satsuki to pass and reach Ryuko. "I understand now. The world is not cut from the same cloth. It's because it is overflowing with inexplicable, unidentifiable things, that the world is so beautiful." Satsuki said.

"Fight at my side so that we may protect that world, Ryuko!" Satsuki requested, bowing to the girl as the wind changed direction, the light rising from behind Satsuki and cloaking the S.S. Naked Sol in an ethereal glow.

Ryuko transformed back into her regular uniform, a sheepish look on her face. "Sheesh, even when you apologize you turn it up to eleven..." She muttered and averted her gaze. "I don't feel like hitting you anymore." She admitted, scratching her cheek sheepishly.

"I've got people I want to protect too. I've got no problems with stopping that excessive mother of ours." Ryuko replied, a small smile on her lips. Sukuyo appeared between the groups, a large plate of her famous croquettes in her arms.

"Now that you've made up, let's eat dinner!" She said, a smile on her lips.

"Oh, your croquettes, m'am?" Ryuko asked excitedly.

"That's right, croquettes stuffed full of minced, unidentifiable things!" She said and turned to Satsuki and her friends. "Dig in, dig in!" She encouraged. Smiles on their faces, the groups joined together, laying out a large blanket for them to sit on as they ate Sukuyo's croquettes with tea, courtesy of Soroi.

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Uzu hissed as he pulled the medicine from his face. "Tch. Damn," he cursed under his breath. The door opened behind him and Uzu turned in surprise.

"Hey, what are you doing in here?" Ryuko asked as she joined Uzu in the infirmary. "The lights were out and I heard something so..." She trailed off and looked around the infirmary, it's only source of light was the moonlight that had peeked through the window. It was a full moon out, so the room was lit up pretty well.

Uzu raised the bottle of medicine in his hand. "Tending to a cut," he said and pointed to the cut just below his eye. "You hit me pretty hard earlier. I hit and scraped my face against a shard of metal." He said as Ryuko walked up to him. He hissed again when applying the medicine to his cut and Ryuko chuckled.

"Here, let me." She insisted and took the medicine from Uzu's hand. She dabbed a bit of the medicine onto her fingertip and reached up to Uzu's face. She frowned and stopped, her hand hovering just above the cut. "You're too tall, sit down so I can see the cut." She ordered.

The green haired male mentally rolled his eyes before he sat down on a nearby table. Ryuko walked up to him, now at eye level with him before she proceeded to apply the medicine.

"Ow! Ow!" Uzu hissed as he grabbed at Ryuko's hand, pulling it away from his face. "Jeez, ever heard of being gentle?" He hissed at her.

Ryuko rolled her eyes. "Pansy," she said as Uzu released her, a pout on his lips as he allowed Ryuko to resume applying the medicine, a comfortable silence passing through them.

He winced against her touch before he spoke up, breaking the silence. "You've really grown. You make quite the rival." Uzu complimented, smirking slightly.

Ryuko smirked as well. "Hn, you're not too bad yourself. Your Shingatsu is pretty good," she replied.

"Pretty good?" He repeated with a chuckle. "That's all I get?"

"That's all you get," Ryuko replied, her smirk turning into a smile another silence passed between them.

The silence was broken was again by Uzu, who had sighed. "Something wrong?" Ryuko asked, her concentration still on the cut she was mending.

"Just thinking," he replied.

"Thinking? About what?"

"... That I missed you." He confessed. Ryuko hesitated, her movements stopping momentarily. She paused and her hands dropped to sides.

"I... I know." She muttered, returning to Uzu's cut.

Uzu raised his brows curiously. "You do?"

Ryuko nodded. "I heard you, that time that you visited me after the Elections." Ryuko said. "I was awake at the time." She confessed.

"Oh. You... You were?" Uzu asked.

Ryuko nodded again. "I was...pretty confused as to why you would miss me then. I...didn't remember you then so I thought it was really weird that you would miss me." She elaborated.

Uzu bit the inside of his cheek, his cheeks warming up. "You... You were awake." He muttered, his brain still wrapping around that fact. He coughed into his hand before his hands dropped back into his lap. He fiddled with his fingers before he spoke up again. "A-And now?" He asked. "You...remember?" He almost whispered the last part.

The girl with the dark hair nodded, a small smile on her lips. "Yeah." She said, pulling her hands away from his face. "All done."

Uzu smiled at her words. "Thanks..." He murmured. "I was starting to wonder if you'd ever remember me," he chuckled and reached forward, lightly hitting the top of her head.

"Forget me again, and I'll kick your ass." He said, a smile on his lips.

Ryuko nodded and grabbed his wrist, removing his hand from her head. "I won't. But good luck trying to beat me," she taunted, a smirk on her face. Uzu grinned at her before turning his attention to his wrist where Ryuko was still holding him. Uzu wiggled his wrist and Ryuko turned to it, her cheeks flushing.

"O-Oh, sorry," she stammered, dropping his hand and began taking a few steps back. "I should, uh...g-go-" she stopped when Uzu reached out, his hand grabbing onto hers.

"Ryuko," Uzu muttered. Ryuko watched as Uzu stood to his feet, rising to his full height. She let out a small gasp when Uzu pulled her to him and she bumped into his chest. She froze, feeling Uzu release her hand and wrap his arm around her shoulders, pulling her closer than she already was.

"Wh-What are you- l-let me go." She squirmed in his grasp, her cheeks turning a brilliant shade of red as Uzu's other hand moved to the back of her head, his fingers running through her hair as he cradled her head against his chest. She flushed, her hands idle at her side as she turned her head, her ear pressing against his chest. She bit her lip as she listened to Uzu's heart beat steadily in his chest, much different from her own racing heartbeat.

She heard Uzu let out a soft sigh, his nose buried on the top of her head.

"Welcome back, Ryuko."

Her eyes widened, her cheeks turning a darker shade of red as she found herself wrapping her arms around his torso. She nodded, her eyes closing. "Mm, thanks..." She muttered.

"Feels good to be back... Uzu."

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Satsuki turned her attention to the screen. "Life Fibers are an organism that drifts through space. If they reach a planet that harbors intelligent life, they cause them to evolve into a state more suitable as an energy source for themselves. They then cover the planet with the beings that have been converted into Life Fibers, and then, using the planet itself as an energy source, cause it to explode, and that force scatters new seeds through space. That is how they continue to reproduce across the universe." Satsuki explained, turning back to the group.

Uzu groaned and leaned back in his chair, crossing his arms over his chest. "Good grief, talk about making things up out of whole cloth..." He said. He heard Ryuko chuckle, hiding her laughter behind her hand. He grinned softly when Jakuzure spoke up.

"There you go again," she whined and Uzu turned to her. "Why do you keep blurting out dumb puns that we've been restraining ourselves from saying? I've had just about enough of

your lack of tact, you stupid Northern Kanto monkey!" Jakuzure huffed, placing her hand on her hip.

Uzu was about to stand to his feet and yell at her when the pinkette turned her head toward Ryuko. "Transfer student, control your boyfriend, why don't you? His lack of tact is bothering me!" She said.

Ryuko stopped mid-chuckle and turned to Jakuzure curiously. "'Boyfriend'? Where did you get that from?" She asked.

Jakuzure smirked. "What's this? You mean you two aren't dating?" She asked, hiding her growing smirk behind her hand. "I could've sworn you two lovebirds were dating when I saw what you two did in the infirmary earlier." She chuckled, her smirk quite obvious on her lips.

Uzu and Ryuko flushed red up to their ears and glanced over at each other. "Infirmary?" Satsuki asked. "What happened in the infirmary?" She asked. Uzu and Ryuko stammered, unsure as to how to respond to Satsuki when a beeping noise from Inumuta's computer interrupted them.

"We'll have to find out about the infirmary later. I've managed to hack into REVOCS' communication satellites. I'll put up a video feed of the Original Life Fiber." Inumuta said.

Uzu cursed under his breath. *Damn, I won't be able to see a thing...* He thought with a pout as the others turned to the screen projection.

"They've beefed up their security so their cameras are all I can get a peek at. Original Life Fiber's destination, Honnouji Academy. Exactly as expected," Inumuta said as the screen traced out the Original Life Fiber's path to Honnouji academy.

Ryuko raised a brow curiously. "Honnouji Academy?" She asked, slightly confused.

Satsuki nodded. "That's right. By attaching the Original Life Fiber to the massive transmitter installed at Honnouji Academy, Ragyo can send out the signal to transform all humanity into Life Fibers," Satsuki explained.

Tsumugu crossed his arms over his chest. "So to stop her plan, we just need to smash that transmitter, then." He reasoned.

"Ah, there is one unexpected item, though." Inumuta shared, his eyes glued to the screen.

Jakuzure raised a brow and turned to the blue haired member of the Elite Four. "Oh? What is it?" She asked.

Inumuta pointed to the screen. "These missiles that are about to strike the ship," he replied with a slight urgency in his voice. Not long after he had shared that piece of vital information, missiles from the Original Life Fiber had crashed into the S.S. Naked Sol, shaking the ship as it rocked in the water.

"Report stuff like that right away, darn it!" Jakuzure yelled as she and the others tried to steady their footing on the shaking ship.

Satsuki grunted as the ship once again remained stable. "Mr. Mikisugi," she called only for the blue haired leader of Nudist Beach to stare at her in disbelief. "I'd like to put you in command of the operation." She said as she strode over onto the nearby platform.

"M-Me?" Mikisugi asked, his eyes wide in disbelief.

Satsuki nodded from her place on the platform. "I will go with Ryuko to stop Ragyo. It is inappropriate for someone on the front lines to be in command. Elite Four, is that clear?" She asked, turning to her four trusted companions.

They nodded. "Yes, ma'm!" They replied as Mikisugi switched places with Satsuki on the platform.

"Alright, we'll see to the destruction of the Honnouji Academy transmitter, Ryuko and Satsuki will keep Ragyo Kiryuin and the Original Life Fiber occupied!" He ordered. "All hands to posts!"

Ryuko scoffed as everyone moved about, preparing for the battle. "There you go again, telling people what to do." Ryuko grumbled as Satsuki approached her.

"You aren't going?" Satsuki inquired as Ryuko turned to her.

"Can *you* go?" Ryuko asked in return.

"I have no choice but to," Satsuki replied.

Ryuko sighed and placed her hands on her hips. "Hurry up and get changed then," she muttered before walking up, her eyes closing. The dark haired girl looked up to see Uzu standing before her. "Got something to say?" She asked. Uzu glanced over at Satsuki who was now heading below deck to retrieve Junketsu from Iori.

The green haired male shook his head. "Not at all," he muttered and turned his attention back to Ryuko, a grin forming on his lips. "Hurry up and defeat that mother of yours. That way things can go back to being normal and we could-" he stopped himself and Ryuko looked at him curiously.

"We could what?" She asked.

Uzu shook his head, his grin softening. "Nothin'." He said. "Slug her a good one, alright? No pulling punches this time,"

Ryuko chuckled and shook her head, a small smirk on her lips. "No pulling punches," she repeated, nodding her head affirmatively.

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"Life Fiber Synchronize: Kamui Senketsu!" Ryuko yelled as she transformed. "Senketsu Shippu!"

"Life Fiber Override: Kamui Junketsu!" Satsuki yelled as she transformed. "Junketsu Senpu!"

A small smirk appeared on Uzu's lips as he, Jakuzure, Gamagoori, and Tsumugu stood on the deck of the ship, watching Satsuki and Ryuko, the two sisters, take to the skies to fight Ragyo.

"So... The infirmary, huh?" Jakuzure spoke up, nudging Uzu's side as she, Gamagoori, and Tsumugu turned to the green haired male.

Uzu quirked a brow and glanced down at the pinkette. "Huh?" He asked, rather confused.

"You know what I'm talking about. You two didn't deny if you were dating or not." Jakuzure said.

Uzu flushed, his brows knitting together. "E-Excuse me? This is hardly the time to be asking about my love life, Jakuzure!" Uzu stammered, his cheeks red.

"You didn't deny it, Sanageyama." Gamagoori pointed out as Jakuzure looked at Uzu knowingly. Uzu stammered, before he had the chance to respond, a large Covers suit emerged from the ocean in front of the S.S. Naked Sol, slamming its large hands onto the deck of the ship and shaking it.

"What the hell is that?" Tsumugu spoke up.

"It appears to be a Covers specialized for combat!" Inumuta shared.

Uzu grit his teeth. "This one will be formidable..." He grumbled, clenching his fists. A dresser crashed in from the sky, landing in the open spot before Uzu and the others. A large fist came bursting out from the doors, knocking the large Covers back. Mankanshoku emerged from the dresser, donned in her Two-Star uniform.

"Honnouji Academy Fight Club President Mako Mankanshoku is back in action!" She yelled. "Rest easy, Ryuko-chan! I'll keep this ship safe!" She yelled.

"M-Mankanshoku!" Gamagoori yelled in surprise.

Jakuzure knitted her brows together. "Hey! How come the underachiever is wearing a Goku Uniform?!" She yelled.

Uzu turned to his earpiece that connected him to Iori. "What's the meaning of this, Iori?!" The green haired male asked.

"Our top priority now is to bolster our forces. The person with the greatest disparity in combat strength in and out of a Goku Uniform was Mankanshoku." Iori explained.

"A highly logical decision," Inumuta piped up, chuckling as he did so. "Well, we're busy. Bye!" He said before disconnecting the line.

Uzu grit his teeth. "Hey!" He yelled into the dead receiver. He and the others turned back to the Covers as it rose back from Mankanshoku's last hit. Before it could make a move, Mankanshoku appeared again, holding onto a large bundle of Suction Devices.

The brunette shoved the Suction Device against the Covers. "999-mount Emergency Rescue Suction Device! Vroom, vroom, vroom!" She yelled as the Device activated simultaneously, freeing people from the Covers.

The Elites stood in awe, watching as Mankanshoku continued to fight the Covers. "Hey! What are you just standing there for?!" Tsumugu yelled as he appeared in his personalized DTR. "You've been fighting this war without your clothes! And you call yourself naked Nudists?!" He yelled before charging forward, his sewing machine guns ablaze.

Uzu looked at the mohawk man incredulously. "I have no intention of becoming someone so...colorful." He grumbled as Gamagoori appeared beside him.

"But we mustn't let Mankanshoku fight them alone!" The large man said.

Jakuzure sighed, but a smirk was seen on her lips. "So, shall we get to it?" She asked as she and the other Elite grabbed their own Emergency Rescue Suction Device.

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Four dressers dropped from the sky, landing in the area between Mankanshoku and the Covers that had surrounded her and the others, and stopped Mankanshoku from her advance. Surprised, the brunette looked up to see the Elite Four emerge from the dressers, standing on top of them and dressed in their new black and gold Goku Uniforms.

"Don't overdo it, Mankanshoku!" Gamagoori said, crossing his arms over his chest as he glared at the mass collection of Covers.

Jakuzure glanced over her shoulder, sending a grin in Mankanshoku's direction. "I'll give you an 'A' for effort, underachiever." She said.

Uzu reached over his shoulder, his hand grasping onto his shinai. "But from here on out, it's our job." He said.

Inumuta smirked and adjusted his glasses, his collar popping open. "So, shall we unveil Iori's final Goku Uniforms?" He asked, turning to his companions.

They nodded together. "Three-Star Goku Uniforms, ultimate configuration!" They yelled, transforming at the same time.

"Blade Regalia: Secret Unsealed!"

"Symphony Regalia: Finale!"

"Probe Regalia: Truth Unveiled!"

"Shackle Regalia: Persona Unleashed!"

"Honnouji Academy Elite Four Ultimate Battle Regalia!" They yelled before charging forward, attacking the Covers.



"Dog!"

"Snake!"

"Monkey!"

"Toad!"

The four attacked again, charging into the Covers and knocking them all aside. "Utter Victory, Single Blow!" They yelled as the Covers exploded, clearing the S.S. Naked Sol of its immediate danger.

Mankanshoku stared up at the Elite Four in awe as she, Tsumugu, and the medics collected the freed individuals from the Covers. "Wow, that was amazing! That's the Elite Four for you!" Mankanshoku chirped.

"No need for such a flashy entrance..." Tsumugu grumbled.

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"Ryuko-chan!" Mankanshoku screamed.

Uzu turned his head in Mankanshoku's directions as the Original Life Fiber whizzed past them, creating a large wave that shook the ship. "Ryuko-chan! Ryuko-chan!!" Mankanshoku screamed as she clung to Gamagoori's leg as she and the others tried to steady themselves as the ship shook.

*Ryuko?! What happened? Are you okay?!* Uzu thought. Judging by Mankanshoku's frantic screaming, he could only assume the worst had happened to Ryuko. He gulped nervously as he tried to search for her, using his mind's eye. *Ryuko, where are you?* He thought frantically as he searched for her aura.

He released a sigh of relief as he sensed her aura, while faint, she was still here and her aura seemed to only grow stronger. *She's alright...* He thought as the ship steadied itself. Uzu passed by Mankanshoku's side as went to join Inumuta and Jakuzure who were already moving ahead.

"Ryuko is alright, Mankanshoku," he whispered to the brunette as Gamagoori placed her hat back on her head. Gamagoori and Uzu left Mankanshoku's side, leaping to join Inumuta and Jakuzure, as they all headed for the Original Life Fiber.

Uzu made a sound in surprise as he felt Ryuko's aura get closer to him. "Yo!" She called, a smirk on her lips as she flew beside Uzu and the rest of the Elite Four.

"R-Ryuko!" He said in surprise.

"Oi, you gave your friend a heart attack, transfer student! She wouldn't shut up!" Jakuzure yelled.

Ryuko gave a small smirk. "Oh? I'll have to apologize to her for that. I gotta go!" She said before speeding off, flying off to the side off the Original Life Fiber as she dug her scissor blades into its side. She flew off the side, pulling her blades from the Original Life Fiber. "Senketsu Senjin!" She yelled as she dove head first into the object, tearing it open with her blades. Uzu smirked before he and the others turned their attention back to Satsuki, just about to get attacked by Ragyo.

"Gamagoori!" Inumuta called. The large man nodded as he hurried ahead and cut in between Ragyo and Satsuki, using his arms as a shield.

"My arms are equally as strong as Bakuzan. Know that I am Ira Gamagoori, Satsuki Kiryuin's living shield!" He yelled as Jakuzure cut in, firing at Ragyo.

"Look at how much I've grown, Auntie Ragyo!" Jakuzure yelled as she fired another round at Ragyo.

Uzu leapt up from the other side of Ragyo, his shinai poised to strike as he let out a battle cry. Ragyo glanced at him, looking unimpressed. "No matter how much you've strengthen those Goku Uniforms, do you really think the blade of a blind man can strike me?" She asked as she and Uzu swung at each other. Her eyes widened in surprise to find a red thread slip from Uzu's face. She glanced at him to find a smirk dancing on his lips.

"You aren't an opponent that one can hold back against, Director." Uzu said as his mask fell from his face, revealing his gray eyes to the world once again. "My eyes are already open! Hence the 'Secret Unsealed'!" He said.

"Lady Satsuki, take these!" Inumuta called as he tossed Satsuki the two pieces of her Bakuzan.

She caught them, nodding gratefully. "Well done, Inumuta!" She complimented as she and the Elite Four charged for Ragyo while Ryuko remained inside the Original Life Fiber, destroying it from the inside.

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Satsuki and the Elite Four turned just in time to see Ryuko emerge from the Original Life Fiber, riding on the Great Naked Dagger as she held an unconscious Mankanshoku in her arms. The five jumped up to join Ryuko to stand on the tip of the Great Naked Dagger.

"You look all dazed and confused, Ragyo." Ryuko spoke up as Ragyo turned to them, her face contorted into one of disbelief and anger. "That ain't surprising. Cause not making sense is kind of our thing!" Ryuko said, her smirk dancing on her lips.

"The girl you mocked as a sham will thwart you," Satsuki said. "Humanity does not live for clothing."

Ragyo glared at them, gritting her teeth. "You waste your time..." She hissed before the Original Life Fiber fell apart and the Great Naked Dagger flew off, digging itself into the

entrance just before Honnouji Academy. The group settled as the smoke and dust dispersed, only for Harime to cut their reunion short.

"Attention, worthless trash of Honnouji Academy!" The blond spoke up, a projection of her shown on the sky Above Honnouji Academy. "The show is not yet over! That Kamui and those idiotic Goku Uniforms, you were all just the opening act! The headline act is the ultimately chic and elegant fashion show put on by the ultimate Grand Couturier and her ultimate model! Prepare yourselves!" Harime said as the tower at Honnouji parted, revealing a large, white outfit, Shinra-Koketsu.

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"That's hot!" Uzu hissed as he pulled the tea cup away from his lips, his tongue burning.

Jakuzure walked over to him, a smirk on her lips. "Your eyes are open, but you're still sensitive to hot drinks, huh?" The pinkette teased, her smirk dancing on her lips.

Uzu flushed from embarrassment. "Sh-Shut up!" He yelled, shooting her a glare before he and the rest of the Elite Four lined up, raising their glasses into the air.

"Don't break these cups," Satsuki interrupted before they could break the cups. The four turned to her in surprise. "We do not go to our deaths. We will return here alive and enjoy another cup of this tea. Right, Soroi?" Satsuki asked, a smile on her lips.

Soroi nodded. "I will have plenty of hot water ready," he said as Satsuki turned her attention to Ryuko and the Mankanshoku family.

"We're leaving Mako in your hands. If anything happens, we'll sue the Kiryuin Conglomerate until they're bankrupt, so take good care of her." Barazo said as Mako moved to join Satsuki and Ryuko.

Satsuki nodded. "I'll keep that in mind." She replied with a smile as everyone gathered before Honnouji's entrance.

"Okay, let's go, Ryuko, Lady Satsuki!" Mako said eagerly. Ryuko and Satsuki nodded as they transformed into their Kamui Senketsu and Kamui Junketsu, respectively.

Satsuki turned her attention back to Honnouji Academy. "Alright! Let's take back our academy!"

"Yeah," everyone roared in agreement, their morale soaring.

Before they could move on, Harime interrupted them, her voice echoing around Honnouji. "Welcome to the runway of death, Ryuko," Harime said, her voice wicked.

"This world belongs to the Life Fibers. You cannot stop the advent of the Starseed Cocoon Sphere." Ragyo said, looking down at Satsuki and her group.

Satsuki stepped forward. "We will! Kiryuin blood flows in our veins, and for that very reason, we will alter that fate." She said, her eyes hardening as she furrowed her brows.

Ragyo smirked down at them. "Life Fiber Domination: Shinra-Kouketsu!" She yelled as she absorbed Hououmaru into the clothes. Ragyo smirked and turned to Ryuko and Satsuki.

"Learn what true fear is, my foolish daughters!"

TBC.

## Chapter 10

Chapter 10:

"How do you like it?" Uzu called as he leapt onto the top of a tower of students, moving him closer to the transmitter's barrier. He clenched his shinai in hand, his brows furrowing. "This is the Ultra Goku Uniform Centurion Calvary Formation! Charge!" He yelled as the tower of students tipped, allowing Uzu to leap toward the transmitter.

He let out a battle cry and dug his shinai into the red barrier in an attempt to destroy it, only for the barrier to reject him and send him flying, the tower of students toppling to the ground. He grit his teeth and adjusted himself in air. "I'm just getting started!" He yelled as he bounced off of other students, leaping from mid-air student to mid-air student as he lunged at the barrier once again only to ricochet off and fall to the ground in front of the others.

Iori looked at the red barrier. "It's the High Velocity Life Fiber Jammer. It spins tiny Life Fibers at high speed to--"

"It's a big, rubber barrier!" Mankanshoku cut in, looking at the red barrier as Iori turned to her, an incredulous look on his face.

"Sanageyama!" Gamagoori called as he and the other Elite members went to check on Uzu.

"O-Ow..." Uzu grumbled as he sat up and rubbed the back of his head, looking up to glare at the red barrier.

Jakuzure huffed and placed her hands on her hips. "That's what you get for running ahead by yourself!" She chided.

"You never learn, do you?" Inumuta asked as he helped Uzu to his feet.

"We have to turn off the jammer!" Mikisugi ordered.

Tsumugu turned to him, the both of them in their DTR's. "Were stopped in our tracks, huh?" Tsumugu asked.

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"Haaaah!" Satsuki yelled as she moved to strike Ragyo. Both of her Bakuzan impaled Ragyo's open palm, only for Ragyo to close her hands and shatter the swords. With a smirk, Ragyo knocked Satsuki aside as Ryuko moved to fight Harime.

The girl with the two-toned hair swung her scissor blades, aiming for the petite blonde. "Hup!" The blonde chirped as she stuck her fingers into the holes near the front of Ryuko's scissor blades. Ryuko frowned and turned her scissor blades out of Harime's reach before she swung again, only for Harime to jump out of Ryuko's reach and land at Ragyo's feet.

Ryuko and Satsuki stood side by side as they looked at Ragyo who stood and smirked down at them. "You are always in my way..." She said as a ball of red light appeared on the area over her chest and a pair of white wing-like objects appeared behind her. "Now, allow me to show you just who the master is." She said as the ball burst, emitting a brilliant rainbow light all over Honnouji. Everyone in Honnouji was immersed into the light, when they came to, they looked down to see they had been reverted back into their regular uniforms.

"Wh... What on Earth?" Inumuta asked, staring down at his uniform in disbelief.

"Th-The stars are gone!" Jakuzure pointed out, gesturing to the pure black spot on Inumuta's chest where the golden stars once were. They turned back to Ryuko and Satsuki as the two turned back into their regular uniforms as well.

Ragyo smirked, an evil grin spreading across her lips. "Shinra Koketsu... Absolute Submission!"

"Shinra-Koketsu is the master of all Life Fibers." Ragyo said. "Life Fibers who rebel against it tremble in fear and are rendered powerless. That is absolute submission." She said. She snapped her fingers and screen projections appeared on the walls of Honnouji, the source of the projections from the transmitter.

She gestured to the screen projections around Honnouji. "These are images from around the world captured by the communications satellite. Look, the people of the world are all wearing clothing made by REVOCS. When I unleash the over of Absolute Submission across the world, the dormant Life Fibers inside REVOCS clothing will awaken. Every last human being will be swallowed up by their clothing, and the Earth will be covered in a single piece of cloth." She smirked.

"The Earth will become a Cocoon Sphere, and the new Life Fibers that will be born will be scattered across the cosmos." Ragyo said.

"How wonderful!" Harime chimed in.

Ragyo smirked. "This is the fundamental truth of the universe. You no longer have any means of opposing me," she said.

Mikisugi and Tsumugu charged forward, jumping up to join Ryuko and Satsuki on the tower. "Were still here to oppose you!" Mikisugi yelled as his and Tsumugu's DTR's combined.

"We're stripped down to bare our nudist soul! Ultimate Double Naked DTR-!" Ragyo stopped Tsumugu and Mikisugi, knocking them aside and sending them flying toward the transmitter, which they ricocheted off and plummeted to the floor.

Ragyo scoffed. "Beneath my notice. I won't kill them yet. After all, these people are precious energy sources for the Original Life Fiber." Ragyo said as the Original Life Fiber suddenly washed into Honnouji, swallowing up the other students as it wrapped around the transmitter and its barrier.

Ryuko grit her teeth as she looked over her shoulder, frozen in her place. "The Original Life Fiber... It's still alive?!" She asked. She turned back to Ragyo as the older woman approached her.

"The Original Life Fiber will absorb you and your friends and be restored to health. I'm sorry, Ryuko. The ploy you risked your life for was all for nothing," Ragyo said, looking down at Ryuko.

Ryuko grit her teeth, glaring at Ragyo.

"Not yet! We aren't done just yet!" Gamagoori yelled and Ryuko turned to him in surprise.

"G-Gamagoori?! Mako! Uzu! Everyone!" Ryuko called to them as Gamagoori miraculously carried the rest of the Elite members and Mako up the stairs, despite the Absolution Submission still in work.

Harime smirked. "Oh my! You must have superhuman strength to be able to move in the Absolute Submission field! But it's no use, Humans are slaves to clothing! That relationship will never change!" She said as Mako, who had been clinging onto Gamagoori's back vaulted herself over the man, landing in front of Harime.

"That's not true! That isn't true at all!" Mako defended. "I mean, with Ryuko and Senketsu, neither one of them is the boss! They have a lovely partnership between human and clothing!" She said as Harime turned her arm into a blade, holding the point of it to Mako's neck.

"I've had enough of you, too." Harime hissed as she pulled back her arm, ready to strike. "Die, already!" She yelled and attacked, only for Gamagoori to cut in between, using his body as a shield to protect Mako.

The brunette gasped in surprise and looked up at Gamagoori. "S-Senpai!" She cried out as Gamagoori glared down at Harime.

"Honnouji Disciplinary Committee Chair Ira Gamagoori! I protect Satsuki Kiryuin and all students of Honnouji Academy!" Gamagoori yelled as he grabbed Harime and threw her into the air. "Know that I am the shield that..." He trailed off, collapsing to the floor.

Harime turned her arms into wings, looking manic. "Ugly! Ugly!" She said as she dove for Gamagoori, turning her arms back into blades. She rose her brows in surprise when Ryuko suddenly appeared in front of her, stripped down to her underwear as she blocked Harime's attack with her scissor blades.

"Like hell you will!" Ryuko spat as Harime backed off, glaring at Ryuko. "I may not be able to fight with my Kamui, but I can still fight on my own! Thanks to the Life Fibers in my body!" Ryuko said, rolling her neck.

"What?!" Harime asked.

"I'm not human, and I'm not clothing! I'm something in between! But right now, I'm really grateful that my body is the way it is! 'Cause it looks like I'm the only one that Absolute Submission field isn't work on!" Ryuko yelled as she charged forward, attacking Harime as Mako moved to Gamagoori's side.

"Senpai! Gamagoori-senpai!" Mako yelled, looking down sadly at her savior.

Tiredly, Gamagoori opened his eyes and looked up at Mako. "Are you safe, Mankanshoku...?" He asked, checking her for injuries. "Then it was worth it..." He said as his head fell back, his eyes closing and a smile appearing on his face.

Mako's eyes widened in horror, her vision becoming blurry. "S-Senpai!" She said, the Elite Four looking on with wide eyes.

"Gamagoori!" Satsuki called in horror, her brows knitting together.

Uzu grit his teeth, his head dropping. "Harime... Damn you..." He growled, his eyes squeezing shut as he tried to compose himself, Mako crying in the background.

Ryuko grit her teeth as Harime retreated to Ragyo's side. "You bastards...!" Ryuko yelled at them.

Ragyo smirked, holding another ball of light in her hand. "Right here, Ryuko. The Absolute Submission field is being powered right by Hououmaru as she sleeps here. This is where you need to aim." She taunted.

Ryuko growled and charged forward, swinging wildly at Ragyo. "Don't screw with me!" She screamed as she kept attacking.

"Lady Ragyo," Harime called, gesturing to the transmitter as the Original Life Fiber had finished wrapping itself around it.

Ragyo smirked. "Yes. I suppose it's time. And now, with this, humanity ends." She said as threads emerged from the Original Life Fiber, reaching up to the tower where everyone was.

Ryuko gasped and turned around, finding the Life Fibers wrap around her friends and bring them to the Original Life Fiber. "Uzu! Guys!" She called as Ragyo grabbed her by the throat, causing Ryuko to choke on her words.

"I'll begin with your friends," Ragyo said as Uzu and the others were pulled against her Original Life Fiber. "They will all become part of the uniform cloth that will cover the world!" Ragyo laughed, until Senketsu flew into her chest, in the shape of a rocket.

Ragyo coughed up blood, looking down at Senketsu in disbelief. "H-How?"

"Like Ryuko, I am neither clothing nor human!" Senketsu yelled. "Shippu Senjin!" The uniform yelled as it drilled further into Ragyo's chest, knocking Hououmaru out of Shinra-Koketsu. In a brilliant light, Shinra-Koketsu's Absolute Submission dispelled and the stars reappeared on the Goku Uniforms.



"Wh-What's going on?" Jakuzure asked as she looked down at her uniform.

Uzu wiggled himself free of the threads, freeing his hand from underneath it. "I can move!" He declared.

"This must mean the Goku Uniforms have their strength back!" Inumuta said.

Satsuki nodded. "It does indeed!" She said as she transformed. "Life Fiber Override: Kamui Junketsu!" She said as she and the other students transformed simultaneously, breaking free from the transmitter.

Finally freed, Mako landed on the ground, digging her fist into the ground as she broke the fibers that had restricted Mikisugi and Tsmugu. "M-Mankanshoku! I never imagined I would be saved by you," Mikisugi said in awe.

Mako lifted her head, revealing redness beneath her eyes to show that she had been crying. "No need to thank me," she replied, devoid of her usual cheeriness.

---

"Way to go, Senketsu!" Ryuko said as she and Senketsu rejoined.

"Did you see that, Ragyo?" Satsuki asked as she moved to Ryuko's side. "This is the power of those you ridiculed as shams.

Ragyo rose to her feet, glaring at the two girls as she placed her hand over the gaping hole in her chest. "H-How can this be? A mere knock-off Kamui..." She muttered in disbelief.

"It's because he is a knock-off..." Ryuko said as she approached Ragyo.

"When Satsuki had heard my voice, that's when I realized it. I realized that I had been given the same power as Ryuko!" Senketsu said.

"Not human..." Ryuko said.

"...and not clothing!" Senketsu said as they transformed.

"This is true Life Fiber Synchronization!" They yelled as Ryuko rushed forward, bashing her head against Ragyo's and knocking the older woman aside.

"Ryuko!" Satsuki called, tossing Ryuko her scissor blade. Ryuko caught it and nodded gratefully as Satsuki appeared beside her, holding the other scissor blade. "The rest of you see to the transmitter!" Satsuki ordered to her remaining Elites.

"On it!" They said and jumped off the tower, landing on a tower of students that carried them to the transmitter in the center of Honnouji.

Before they could reach it, Harime dropped in between them on her parasol. "Nope! Nope, nope, nope!" She yelled. "You'll have to through me!" She yelled as she summoned a hoard of clones of herself.

Jakuzure jumped out of the way. "What are you talking about, you low-grade, mass-produced crap?!" She yelled, firing at the blonde.

Inumuta ducked, dodging one of the Harime copies as he sent a cable in her direction, attacking her. "It's not even worth collecting data from you," he scoffed and attacked another clone.

Uzu sliced one of the blondes in half, it disappeared in front of him and he looked around cautiously. "There's no end to them!" He yelled as Jakuzure and Inumuta joined him, back to back.

"At this rate, we'll never reach the transmitter." Inumuta said. The trio looked around curiously when they heard a loud, raucous laughter from above. They looked up in surprise to find Gamagoori jumping for the transmitter, grabbing onto the barrier.

"Leave the transmitter to me!" He yelled.

Mako, down on the ground floor, looked up in surprise as she knocked aside a Harime clone. "Senpai?! You're alive!" She called to him, her eyes watering.

"Yes! Just to be safe, I was wearing a titanium-steel belly band made by my relatives' metal work!" He replied. "It hurts but the wound isn't serious." He reassured.

Jakuzure glared up at him, biting her lip. "Don't act tough when all you did was pass out!" She yelled at him.

"I will atone for my shameful behavior with my actions. Shackle Regalia: Persona Unleashed!" He said as he transformed, ripping the barrier open. "Behold the power of my freed ego! The shackles undone and all pride cast aside! Taste the wrath of Bakukai-Gouteki!" He yelled, firing at the transmitter, ripping an opening in the actual machine and leaving it exposed.

"We'll take it from here!" Mikisugi yelled as he and Tsumugu appeared and jumped through the opening that Gamagoori had left open. "If we Nudists don't strut out stuff, we'll have gotten undressed for nothing!" Mikisugi yelled as he and Tsumugu ejected from their DTR, sending the machine flying into the open hole in the transmitter. The barrier around the transmitter dispersed as the transmitter itself blew up, causing roars of joy to erupt amongst the team.

Ragyo turned to her destroyed machine in alarm. "What?!" She asked as Ryuko and Satsuki cut through her twice, swinging their scissor blades in sync.

"Your plan for the Cocoon Sphere Nativity has come undone, too, Ragyo!" Satsuki yelled as she and Ryuko turned to their mother.

Instead of appearing shocked, Ragyo merely smirked down at the girls. "Have they, now?" She asked as she turned her attention to the side. "Nui, sacrifice your body." She ordered.

Harime snapped out of her craze, returning to her usually cheerful demeanor. "Oui, Mama!" She said and giggled before she turned her arms into blades, decapitating herself and turning her body back into Life Fibers. The others stared in horror as the Original Life Fiber swallowed up Harime's remains and sprung back to life, spiraling around the destroyed transmitter. The Original Life Fiber reached over, swallowing up Ragyo as well as it molded with Shinra-Koketsu, transforming Ragyo and the transmitter into a rocket.

"Nui, leave the rest to me." Ragyo said as she took off to the sky, the rocket beneath her starting off as she took to space.

The smoke cleared and Ryuko glared up at Ragyo's retreating form. "Hey! Come back here!" She yelled as Inumuta suddenly appeared beside them, using his uniform and a screen projection as a makeshift laptop.

"I've determined Ragyo's objective." Inumuta reported. "Her destination is the REVOCS communication satellite!"

"So Ragyo and Koketsu are trying to hook directly in to the satellite and broadcast the Absolute Submission signal around the world?" Mikisugi inquired.

Satsuki nodded. "Yes, but since this is an awakening signal, it can't render our Goku Uniforms powerless. We will be able to counter attack." She explained. Satsuki bit her lip and turned to the projections of the world on the walls of Honouji. "It's begun?" She asked.

Uzu blinked, sensing that Ryuko had gone quiet. He turned to her and found her glaring up at the sky. "Ryuko?" He asked her.

She snapped out of her trance and turned to Uzu, giving him a small smirk. She took in a deep breath, hardening her features as she turned to the others. "I'll go." She said and the others turned to her in surprise. She nodded affirmatively. "I'll go." She declared.

Suddenly, Mako popped up beside Ryuko. "Ryuko-chan, let's go on date!" Mako exclaimed.

Ryuko blinked in surprise. "Huh?" She replied dumbly.

Uzu glanced at the girls in surprise. *H-Huh?! B-But... But I...*

"Listen, when you get back, let's go on a date!" Mako said. "You're making this a world where girls can eat ice cream and go shopping while wearing a cute dress and cute accessories and wear whatever clothes they like and get all dolled up without fear!" She said.

Ryuko blinked in surprise, giving her friend a confused look. She glanced to the side, her eyes locking with Uzu's. She sent him a small smile before she turned back to Mako. "You're on," she replied.

"It's in your hands now." Satsuki said. "The survival of the human race--"

"For the sake of girl's fashion!" Mako cut in.

Ryuko grinned before she took in a deep breath. "You can count on me!" She declared as she began to glow golden. "I'm going to put on all your Goku Uniforms!" She said. The uniforms removed off of everyone, leaving them in the nude as Ryuko absorbed the stars from the uniforms into Senketsu.

Her entire outfit turned red, and her hair glowed a brilliant golden color. "Senketsu-Kisaragi!" She yelled as the broken yellow skirt around her transformed into a giant, spiral-patterned rocket before she took off into the air, following after Ragyo. Uzu smiled gently as he placed his hand on his hips, watching as Ryuko flew off.

*Good luck, Ryuko.*

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"This will end it!" Ryuko yelled as she charged forward, one of Ragyo's spears impaling her.

Ragyo cackled. "What's going to end?! Your life?!" She laughed.

Ryuko smirked as she grabbed onto the spear. "You're the one who's finished!" She declared, turning to Ragyo. "Did you forget? The closer I come to dying, the stronger I bounce back! I gritted my teeth and took your attack as a dose of tough love from Mom. And I will until Senketsu and I max out our growth!" Ryuko said as Senketsu began to absorb Koketsu.

"Dad's ultimate weapon wasn't some stupid scissor blade! It was me and Senketsu! True, we're neither human nor clothing! But at the same time, we are both human and clothing! We are everything! People can't become clothing! People are people! Clothing is clothing!" Ryuko yelled.

Ragyo glared down at her daughter. "What is this nonsensical garbage you're spouting?" She yelled back.

"Nonsensical is our thing!" Ryuko yelled as Senketsu fully absorbed Koketsu. Ryuko reached over to the communication satellite, using the antenna as a microphone.

"Listen up, all you Life Fibers!" She yelled into the makeshift microphone. "People are people, and clothes are clothes! Turn all humans back into humans!" She shouted, as the cocoon around Earth disappeared, the people used as energy sources falling back to Earth. Ryuko turned back to Ragyo, her brows furrowing.

"I can't believe this is happening..." Ragyo murmured in disbelief. "Everything is returning to nothing?"

Ryuko nodded as Senketsu turned back to his original form. "That's right, Mother. The Earth will never be a Cocoon Sphere now. Come peacefully back to Earth." Ryuko said.

Ragyo scowled at her daughter. "Pathetic," she spat before she pulled her Life Fiber heart out of her chest. "I will decide how I die! I will carry out your words first!"

"No!" Ryuko yelled.

"Ryuko, this is not the end! Life Fibers are continuing their advance across the cosmos. More will come to this world! Of that, you can be sure." Ragyo said, clutching her heart in her hand.

Ryuko frowned, her brows furrowing together. "Even if they do, people will go on being people. Of that, you can be sure." Ryuko said before Ragyo crushed her heart, her entire body vanishing before Ryuko.

"Ryuko, let's go home." Senketsu said, snapping Ryuko out of her trance. Ryuko looked down at Senketsu, her eyes widening in surprise to see him falling apart.

"What's wrong, Senketsu?"

"Shinra-Koketsu's power appears to be greater than I thought."

"W-Wait! Are you-" she stopped as Senketsu pulled her back down to Earth.

"Hurry! There's not much time!"

---

*"Senketsu!"*

Uzu looked up in alarm. *That was Ryuko's voice!* He looked around, searching for any signs of her.

"Monkey?" Jakuzure spoke up as she and the others turned to Uzu as he continued to look up at the skies. "Is... Something wrong?" She asked unsurely.

Uzu ignored her as he continued to search. He gasped as he spotted a faint figure falling from the sky. He recognized it immediately. "Ryuko..." He murmured, his eyes widening as he watched Ryuko plummet down to Honnouji Academy. He moved forward, his eyes locked on her.

"Ryuko! Ryuko-!!" He stopped in his footsteps and turned to see Satsuki run past him, running for Ryuko.

"Snap out of it! SNAP OUT OF IT, RYUKO!!" She screamed as she caught Ryuko, skidding backward from the impact. Mako ran forward next, helping Satsuki brace from the impact.

"Ryuko-chan!" The brunette yelled.

Uzu dug his feet into the ground as Mako, Satsuki, and Ryuko came in the Elite Four's direction. "Matoi!" Gamagoori, Inumuta, and Jakuzure yelled as they also braced for impact.

Uzu furrowed his brows. "Ryuko!!" He yelled as the Mankanshoku family and the rest of the school helped, all of them falling into a giant heap. They parted as everyone sat on the ground, exhausted, while Satsuki and Ryuko sat in the center of everyone. Satsuki released Ryuko from her embrace, looking at her younger sister with a fond look in her eye.

"Welcome home." Satsuki said, a tired smile on her features.

Ryuko smiled and Uzu immediately noticed the redness on Ryuko's nose and under her eyes.

*Had she been crying?*

"Good to be back... Sis." Ryuko replied warmly as they all rose to their feet. Tiredly, Uzu walked over to Ryuko. She turned to him and her eyes widened in surprise pulled her into a one-armed hug, careful to give her enough room so he didn't accidentally touch her inappropriately. His arm merely wrapped around her shoulders tiredly while he rested his cheek on the top of her head. She looked up at him curiously as Uzu pulled back.

"Welcome back," he murmured softly, a smile on his lips.

She nodded and returned the smile. "Good to be back."

Uzu nodded and glanced at her curiously. "Ryuko... Where's Senketsu?" He asked. His eyes widened in alarm as Ryuko gasped and turned her head toward the sky from where she had fallen, her eyes watering.

She turned back to him, her lip quivering and the tears threatening to spill from her eyes. "U-Uzu..." Her voice trembled.

"Look at what you did, monkey." Jakuzure piped up, her brows furrowing. Uzu turned to the pinkette in alarm. "You made the poor girl cry!" She accused and gestured to Ryuko.

Uzu gulped and turned back to Ryuko, opening his arms up tentatively. Without much hesitation, Ryuko ran into his open arms, her arms wrapping around his torso as she buried her face into his chest, the tears spilling from her eyes. Uzu's brows knitted together as he looked down at Ryuko, his arms wrapping around her.

"Hey... Hey, it's okay..." He murmured, stroking her hair comfortingly.

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Uzu checked his watch, an excited grin on his face. He looked up to see Satsuki, in her new cute haircut, walk over to Gamagoori. Jakuzure was currently helping the large man, adjusting the tie on his suit and making sure his hair was in top tier condition. Inumuta was beside Uzu, his eyes on his phone as he reviewed the plan of action again.

"They'll be here in ten minutes," Inumuta spoke up and adjusted his glasses.

Gamagoori was visibly shaking, his cheeks red from embarrassment as he turned to Satsuki. "I-I-I don't think I can do this, L-Lady Satsuki." Gamagoori stammered.

Jakuzure patted his arm in a friendly manner. "Come now, toad! We worked so hard to get you up to this point! Don't go and run off with your tail between your legs when you've made it this far." Jakuzure encouraged.

"Toads don't have tails, Jakuzure." Inumuta spoke up.

"Bite me, doggy." Jakuzure said with a roll of her eyes.

Helplessly, Gamagoori turned to Satsuki. She offered him a small smile. "You'll be just fine, Gamagoori. You can do it. She'll say yes, I know it." Satsuki said as she patted Gamagoori's hand in a comforting manner.

"Seven minutes, people." Inumuta warned.

Uzu turned to Satsuki. "We better get going then! We'll meet you at the spot, Lady Satsuki?" Uzu asked, his grin dancing on his lips.

She nodded and reached into her purse to pull out a small bouquet of pink flowers. "I'll be there." She said, handing Gamagoori the flowers. "Now hurry!" She ushered the group away, a small smile on her lips.

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Jakuzure peeked around the corner and a smirk appeared on her face. "I can see them!" She declared, turning back to the others.

"Thirty seconds." Inumuta stated, glancing down at his phone.

Uzu grinned up at Gamagoori, patting his shoulder encouragingly. "You got this, Gamagoori!" Uzu encouraged.

Gamagoori bit his lip, his hands shaking as he nearly crushed the flowers in grip. "A-Are you sure? I mean what if she says-"

"She won't say no!" Jakuzure insisted.

"Fifteen seconds," Inumuta announced, and that seemed to make Gamagoori a little more nervous.

"I don't think I can do this!" He said as he stood to his feet.

Uzu, Jakuzure, and Inumuta panicked and brought the man back to their hiding spot. "No! You are going through with this! She will say yes and you guys will go on the best date ever!" Uzu said, looking Gamagoori in the face.

"Five seconds!" Inumuta said.

Gamagoori blinked, his cheeks incredibly red. "Are you sure?" He asked.

"We'll find out! It's time!" Inumuta said as he, Uzu, and Jakuzure pushed Gamagoori out from their hiding spot. Gamagoori stumbled in front of the girls, his face red. Uzu and the others peeked around the corner to see Satsuki pull Ryuko to her side. Mako continued on, not noticing that her friends had disappeared. She finally looked up to see the blushing male in front of her.

"Gamagoori-senpai!" She greeted in surprise, a smile on her face.

Gamagoori stood frozen, his cheeks red and his flowers hidden behind his back. "M-M-Ma-Mankanshoku," he greeted shakily.

"Is there a reason you're here, Gamagoori-senpai? Oh, maybe you're here to try the crepes too?" She asked.

Gamagoori flushed and shook his head. "A-Actually, I'm here for y-y-you, Mankanshoku." He said.

Mako cocked her head to the side. "Me?" She asked. Gamagoori nodded before he held his hand out to the brunette, revealing the bouquet of pink flowers to her. Mankanshoku blushed and took the flowers from Gamagoori.

"I'd be honored if you w-went out on a date wi-with me, M-Mankanshoku." Gamagoori said.

She looked up at him in surprise, her cheeks dusted a cute shade of pink. "Really? I-I'd love to go out on a date with you, Gamagoori-senpai!" She cheered before tackling the large man into a hug.

"Woo!" Jakuzure cheered as she, Inumuta, and Uzu emerged from their hiding spot, Satsuki and Ryuko also going to join the group. Jakuzure and Inumuta went to Gamagoori as he and Mako separated from their hug, Inumuta and Jakuzure congratulating the pair. Ryuko also joined the group, congratulating Mako as she showed off her bouquet. Uzu stood back, putting his hands into his pockets as he smiled at his friends.

It was nice, just being able to laugh and hang out like this. Movement in his peripheral snapped Uzu out of his trance and he turned to see Satsuki approach him, a smile on her face. "Having fun?" She inquired.

Uzu nodded. "Yeah, it's nice not having to worry about a war against Life Fibers." Uzu chuckled. Satsuki smiled as she and Uzu turned back to the others. Suddenly, Uzu found a bouquet of flowers being put into his hands. He turned to see Satsuki smiling at him and Uzu flushed. "L-Lady Satsuki... I'm honored, but..." Uzu trailed off as he saw Satsuki shake her head.

"They're not from me, Sanageyama. I'm giving it to you for the same reason I gave the flowers to Gamagoori." She said.

Uzu looked at her in confusion. "... But I don't like Mankanshoku like that..." He muttered.

Satsuki smiled softly and shook her head. She turned her head over in Ryuko's direction and Uzu followed her gaze, his cheeks flushing when his eyes landed on Ryuko.

Uzu turned back to her. "Oh, n-no... I couldn't..." Uzu stammered, trying to give back the bouquet to Satsuki. She shook her head and placed the flowers back in Uzu's hands.

"Go," Satsuki insisted. Uzu bit his lip as he looked down at the flowers in his hand. He took in a deep breath and looked up at Satsuki. She gave him an encouraging smile and Uzu



nodded, taking in another deep breath before he headed for Ryuko. He hid the flowers behind his back and tapped the dark haired girl on the shoulder.

"Hey, Uzu. I shouldn't be surprised that you're here too," Ryuko said as she turned to him.

Uzu nodded and averted his gaze, his cheeks red. "Hey, Ryuko... Mind if I ask you a question?" He asked.

Ryuko raised a brow but nodded anyway. "Sure, what's up?" She asked.

Uzu bit his lip, his heart pounding in his chest. "R-Ryuko... Would.... Would y-you..." He moved the flowers from behind his back and showed them to her, his gaze turning to look down at his shoes. "Would you g-go on a d-d-date with m-me?" He asked. He felt her gently take the flowers from his hand and he turned back to her, noticing the small smile on her lips.

"Yes."

Uzu's eyes widened, a wide smile threatening to appear on his face.

"Everyone is getting asked out today!" Jakuzure said, placing her hands on her hips.

"Is that jealousy, I hear?" Inumuta teased as Jakuzure sent him a glare. Satsuki chuckled, hiding her laughter behind her hand.

"I say we go eat and celebrate." Satsuki offered, a smile on her lips. She turned to Inumuta. "Inumuta, is there any place of interest nearby?" She inquired as the blue haired male turned to his phone, his fingers tapping away at the screen.

"There's a nice restaurant nearby, not far from where we are." Inumuta said.

Satsuki nodded and turned to the others. "Shall we go then?" She asked as Inumuta led the way, reading the directions off his phone.

Uzu smiled, watching as Satsuki, Mako, Jakuzure, and Gamagoori followed after the blue haired male. Uzu tucked his hands into his pockets and turned on his heel, following after them, being one of the last to leave. He stopped in his tracks when he noticed that Ryuko wasn't following.

Curiously, he glanced over his shoulder to see Ryuko standing with her back to him. The flowers he had given her were in one hand, her other hand was placed over her heart as she looked up at the sky, a sad look in her eye. Off to the side, Uzu noticed a small child wearing a sailor uniform. He bit his lip and turned back to Ryuko, his brows knitting together.

He let out a soft breath before he composed himself, allowing a small smile to show on his lips as he walked over to Ryuko.

"Hey," he nudged her side and she turned to him in surprise. "Let's get going? The others will leave us behind," he said to her.

Ryuko nodded and Uzu smiled as he waited for her. She turned back to the sky, a small smile on her lips before she turned back to Uzu. She hugged the bouquet of flowers to her chest before they moved to follow after the others. Ryuko glanced up at Uzu, her smile growing on her lips as she held the flowers closer to her. Uzu blinked and looked down at Ryuko, catching her looking up at him.

Ryuko and Uzu smiled at each other, happy to be at each other's side.

FIN.

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